



**-Bible Day-  
2023**

**Samuel  
Schereschewsky**  
(skër-ës-küs'ki)

Translator  
Extraordinaire



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In 1831, Samuel Schereschewsky (skēr-ēs-kūs'kī) was born in Lithuania to Jewish parents. They urged him to pursue rabbinic training, but the Messiah had other plans. At the rabbinical school in Zhytomyr, Samuel received a copy of the New Testament in Hebrew. As he read it, he became convinced that Jesus Christ was the Messiah he and his people had long awaited. Eventually, he immigrated to the USA where he was baptized by immersion and became a Baptist.

By the time he was 28 years old, he was already fluent in Yiddish, Polish, Lithuanian, Russian, and German. Then he decided the Lord was calling him to China “to translate the Bible into Chinese.”

As Samuel traveled to China, a six-month journey, he studied the language. By the time he arrived in China, he could write classical Chinese but was convinced that a total mastery of the language was necessary. In order to master the language, he spent nine hours a day studying for the first five years of his time in China.

After spending a decade alone, Schereschewsky heard of a single missionary woman coming to China. On a whim, he hiked 700 miles through the cold climate before hitching a ride on a gunboat for

another 200 miles. After meeting Susan, they were engaged in two weeks; they married soon afterward. His story would have been incomplete had it not been for the role Susan played in the ministry.

In order to accomplish the translation work, he hired two copyists—one to work during the daytime and the other to work evenings. His wife said that getting him to bed was always a task. She often found him working at 2:00 a.m.

After completing the New Testament, Samuel began translating the Old Testament, which took 14 long years. Having been born a Hebrew, he was eminently qualified for the task.

In his final years, Schereschewsky pressed on toward his goal of seeing the entire Bible in the Mandarin (Chinese) language in spite of exhaustion, fever, and a brain lesion. Although he left China for rest, his health continued to deteriorate until he was nearly totally paralyzed. He returned to China in order to finish the task. Using only the middle finger of his right hand, he typed a revision of the Mandarin Old Testament and a translation of the entire Bible in Wenli. The Schereschewskys’ historic achievement lives on today in the hearts of millions of Chinese people.

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### God’s Word Still Changes Lives

Just as the translation work of Samuel Schereschewsky changed the lives of people, God’s Word continues to do the same today. Without His Word in their own language, people struggle to understand God’s truth. They may trust Christ, but without His Word in a language they can easily understand, spiritual growth is very difficult.

If you would like to be involved in the life-changing ministry of Bible translation, you may contact Bibles International at 616.942.7712 or [inbox@biblesint.org](mailto:inbox@biblesint.org).



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