

# BIBLE DAY - 2024

In 1966, the United States Congress established a permanent day of the year to honor Bible translation. It is called **World Bible Translation Day**, and it occurs annually on **September 30**. Bibles International is encouraging churches to make an intentional observance of **Bible Day** on **Sunday, September 29, 2024**. Highlight the ministry of Bible translation and become familiar with what is being done today to provide God's Word in the nearly 4000 languages still waiting to have the Bible in their native tongue. Honor those, past and present, who have given so much - even their very lives - for the sake of the Bible. Pray for the translation work being done. Give to financially support current translation projects.

**Bible Day is an opportunity for churches to serve those in need through prayer and special offerings for the ministry of Bible translation around the world.**

Featuring  
**Samuel Ajayi  
Crowther**

**Translator of the  
Yoruba Bible**



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Few, if any, Bible translators have the claim to fame that Samuel Ajayi Crowther has. Born in the early 1800's in what is now Nigeria and given the name Ajayi, he and his family were captured by Fulani slave traders when he was approximately 12 years old. Later, he was resold to Portuguese slave traders. While crossing the Atlantic Ocean, his ship was intercepted by a British vessel involved in the antislavery trade movement, and he and his family were eventually rescued by Anglican missionaries and resettled in Sierra Leone. It was in that country that Ajayi first studied English.

There, he became a Christian and took the name Samuel Crowther, the name of a prominent English clergyman. He became an outstanding student, helping several Europeans in their studies of African languages. Due to his connection with the Church Missionary Society, Samuel traveled back and forth between Europe and Africa several times.

While back in Nigeria in approximately 1843, he began translating literature into Yoruba, his mother tongue. His first work was that of compiling a Yoruba dictionary, followed by the translation of the Yoruba Bible. He further translated the Anglican Book of Common Prayer into the Yoruba language. In 1852,

he worked on *A Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language* including a large number of local proverbs.



Crowther died on December 31, 1891, at the age of 82. He was buried at the Ajele Cemetery in Lagos, Nigeria. Later, when the government wanted to redevelop the site for new government offices, his family was notified but chose to delay the exhumation. In 1976, the body was exhumed and reburied in an elaborate ceremony, and a cenotaph was installed at the Cathedral Church of Christ in Lagos.

**God's Word Still Changes Lives**

Just as the translation work of Samuel Ajayi Crowther 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).**



**Bibles International**

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