

PANDITA RAMABAI

Pioneer for Christ



Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati (1858-1922) was born into a high-caste Brahmin family in India at a time when females were rarely educated. Her father was unconventional, however, and taught his daughter to read both the Sanskrit and Hindu languages. This educational foundation would be important for Ramabai's future work. She was so highly educated that she earned the title of Pandita, a Sanskrit term meaning "learned scholar."

Much of Ramabai's early life in India was spent challenging social norms. Originally, she was seen as a Hindu reformer. She founded Sharada Sadan, a home for young widows. After losing her parents and brother during the severe famine in India, she married outside her caste – another practice that was socially unacceptable. She was widowed at age 23, however, and was left with a two-year-old daughter.

While traveling in England, Ramabai learned of Christianity and left her Hindu religion to follow Christ. Her deep, personal relationship with Christ gave her a strong sense of joy, power, and purpose. Her new faith changed the focus of her work and connected her with a network of Christian men and women internationally. These new friends supported her in learning English.

As an expression of Christ's love for her, Ramabai was inspired to help marginalized women and children. She knew that the gospel was for everyone, regardless of caste or gender.

In her final years, Pandita Ramabai concentrated on translating the Scriptures into a language understood even by women and children. She translated the entire Bible into the Marathi language, a language widely spoken in India. In fact, it is spoken by over 85 million people. She learned Hebrew and Greek specifically so that she might be able to translate the Bible. With her ability to read Sanskrit, Hindi, and English, she had an excellent background for translation work.

Ramabai spent 12-15 years translating the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Marathi. It was a work so significant that it occupied the entire latter part of her life. She completed the final draft of the Marathi Bible just hours before her death on April 5, 1922. Undoubtedly, she was richly rewarded upon entering heaven's gates.

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.

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BIBLE DAY - 2025

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 28, 2025**. 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.

God's Word Still Changes Lives

Just as the translation work of Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati 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.

To request a representative from Bibles International to speak at your church, or 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.



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