Resource: Key Terms (SRV)

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Key Terms (SRV) is based on: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia) Terms,

Key Terms (SRV)

Y

Yahweh, Yahweh, yoke, yoke

Yahweh

About 1200 to 1500 years before the birth of Jesus, when God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, Moses asked God: "But when the Israelites will ask me who has sent me, what should I say?" Moses is asking here for the name of God. And God gives Moses a name for God that he can use: He tells Moses, "You can tell the people that *Yahweh* has sent me." This name means something like "I am," or "I am who I am." When people hear this name of God, they remember that God created the world and everything in it. God never changes, he is a God who is forever, and a God who keeps his promises.

There are other names for God in the Bible, like "the most high God," or "the God of the heavenly armies," but when people hear this name of God, Yahweh, they think especially of the covenant, the special promise, that God had made with the Israelites at the time of Moses. The name Yahweh was a very personal name for God that showed the close relationship that God had with the people of Israel.

The Jews were very careful with pronouncing this name of God. God was holy, and therefore his name was holy. They did not want to offend God by using his name casually. Over time, the Jewish people used God's name less and less because they were afraid to offend God. Therefore, when the Jews were reading from their Scriptures, the books of the Bible that we now call the Old Testament, they did not pronounce the word Yahweh. Instead, every time that they saw the word Yahweh, they spoke a word that means master, or lord. This was a sign of their respect for God.

Because of this, some Bible translations also write lord instead of Yahweh.

Some Bible translations use the word Jehovah. This word is actually a misunderstanding; it is a mixture of the word Yahweh and the Hebrew word for lord. It is not a real word or name.

When you are translating "Yahweh," be careful about the following things:

- You could say something that sounds like Yahweh. We actually do not know how this word was pronounced in Hebrew, so you can pronounce it in any way that is easy in your language.

- You can also try to make a phrase that in your language means something like "I am," "the one who is," "the one who is forever." However, this can sound a bit awkward sometimes.

- Maybe there is a name in your language for a deity, someone that people in your community consider to be a god. In some cases, it might be possible to use this name for Yahweh. However, you will have to be careful with this. If the character of the deity has some similarities with the character of God, this may work. Using this name for the God in the Bible will help the people to learn that only the Bible tells them what their god really is like. However, this can also cause misunderstanding, confusion, or objection from the people in the wider community.

- You can say "lord" instead of Yahweh, just as the Jews did. However, often the Bible also uses a word that really means lord, and sometimes speaks about "the lord Yahweh." So, you will have to find a way to make clear when the word is a translation of the word lord, and when it is a translation of the word Yahweh.

You need to take time to make a decision, and you may have to change your decision again after some time. Translating the word Yahweh is difficult! Pray about it and talk about it with many people to hear what they think.

Yahweh

Audio Content

yoke

A **yoke** is a wooden collar with two openings that people use to tie two oxen or two other animals together. Then the animals can walk together to pull a plow or a cart. The yoke helps the animals to walk in step with each other so that they can pull their load smoothly. For this to work, the animals have to be about the same size.

The Bible sometimes uses yoke as special language for being married. When two people are married to each other, but they are not suitable for each other, you can say that they are unequally yoked together. It is as if two different animals are trying to pull a load, but they are going at different speeds. The result is a very bumpy ride!

People can also force a person to carry a yoke if the person is a slave or a prisoner. The Bible sometimes uses the word yoke as special language to talk about slavery or hardship. When someone has to work very hard, you can say that he is carrying a heavy yoke.

yoke

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