

Did You Know?

*Jesus 'The Word' was code
which the Jews understood*

Did You Know?

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1

'The Word' was Jesus:

Did You Know?

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14



Why?

Did You Know?

The answer lies partly in the translation John used. While John used the Greek word *logos* when referring to “the Word”, he himself was likely influenced by Aramaic translations of the OT. In Jesus’ day, Aramaic was the Jewish people’s native language. While the OT was translated from the Hebrew into Greek, the language of the wider Gentile world, it was also translated into Aramaic. These Aramaic translations are called Targums. One specific Targum of the Pentateuch, ‘Targum Onqelos’, was sanctioned by Jewish religious authorities for use in the synagogue.



Did You Know?

The Aramaic term for ‘word’ is *memra*, which was often used to refer to God. So, the Targums communicated the idea of God as “Word” in hundreds of places. Therefore, most Jews of John’s day would have been familiar with this naming method.

For example:

Did You Know?

“How long will they not believe in the name of my **Word** in spite of all the signs of my miracles that I have done among them?”

Numbers 14:11 (Targum
Neofiti)

“And how long will they not believe in me” (NKJV)



Example #2:

Did You Know?

“And they heard the sound of the *memra* of the Lord God walking in the garden”

Genesis 3:8 (Targum Neofiti)



Did You Know?

Because of the Targums, Jews in the days of John would have understood the notion that God could come to them in human form. John's writing shows that he believed that was exactly what the disciples had witnessed in Jesus. Therefore, it was natural for him to refer to Jesus as 'The Word'.

Did You Know?

John wrote his gospel in Greek, but his theology was Jewish, conveyed to him through Aramaic. Therefore, both Jews and non-Jewish people got the point in unmistakable terms: ‘The Word’ of the OT had been made flesh and walked among us. (John 1:14)

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