

Is there blood on the Shroud of Turin?

The Turin Shroud is the most famous relic in the world. Millions believe that it is the burial cloth of Jesus Christ bearing his crucified and bloodied image. The cloth is kept at Turin in Italy. The cloth is an enigma. Many say it is a miracle. But in fact the greatest mystery is who the cloth depicts for the man whose face is on the Shroud is not Jesus Christ.

There is DNA to be found on the cloth. The Institute of Legal Medicine in Genoa in 1995 speaking of the DNA taken from the foot bloodstains delivered the shocking result that both male and female DNA were found. There was speculation that it may have come from women who handled the cloth such as the Poor Clare nuns. Cardinal Saldarini thought it would be very unlikely if any DNA from the time of the crucifixion were to be found.

Others feel that as the samples were so minute you would expect no significant DNA from females.

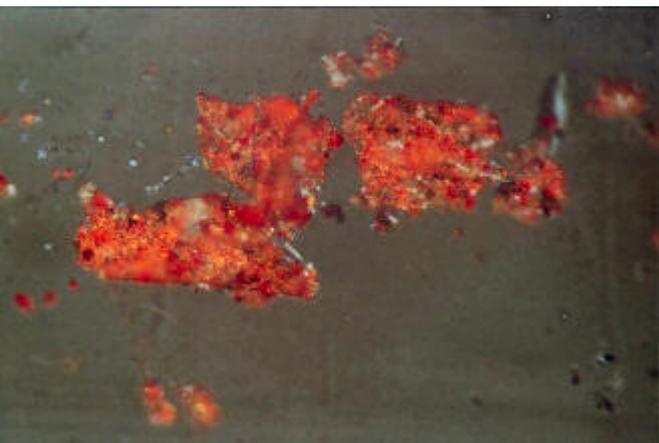
Some think that Jesus had female DNA for his mother had no sperm to make him, and perhaps female blood was used for the cloth. If it is menstrual blood then we must ask if some kind of mockery was intended.

Quick Facts

The cloth carries blood marks. It seems the blood is not real. It does not behave as blood should on the cloth. And the pattern is wrong in the real world. In other ways it is too perfect.

#The blood should not be bright red - the excuse that it stays red if a person undergoes a traumatic death though possible is still too far fetched and overlooks the fact that all the blood is red and that some of the wounds were inflicted before the crucifixion. We should see at best red blood and dark blood. The shade is too uniform.

Samples of the "blood" have been taken. There is controversy about the genuineness of the blood samples: "Archbishop of Turin Cesare Nosiglia insists they cannot be authenticated as having come from the Turin cloth". Admittedly the samples look very odd for allegedly 2000 year old blood. Believers have excuses for why they are so red on the cloth but one would think they should change a lot when hacked off the cloth. They have an artificial appearance. If they are odd then what else is odd about them? How real are the "explanations" for how odd they are? Are they really just guesses?



The "real blood" hype was instigated by discredited John Heller and Alan Adler.

Other oddities are how unreliable Adler, who is unreliable with what he wants to find, found no protein where you just had a Jesus image but did find it in the blood areas. The image not being a contact print and the blood being one would be unimaginable. It would be a sheer contradiction.

#DNA proof that it is blood is absent as even pro-shroudists admit. The DNA from the blood area can be explained by people touching the cloth through the years."One issue that is raised in such experiments is that of

DNA contamination, i.e. did the DNA that was sequenced truly originate from blood cells present on the cloth; or might there also be contribution from so-called touch DNA: DNA transferred by contact from other persons directly or indirectly through a handled object that came in contact with the cloth. Because the abovementioned genes are not exclusive to blood cells, but are also found in numerous other cell types, including skin, this remains somewhat of an open issue" <https://www.shroud.com/pdfs/kearse1.pdf>.

Is the blood human? "While most tests support the conclusion that the blood is (at least) of primate origin, there is only a single (brief) serological study that extends this conclusion to a human origin. The current paper evaluates the empirical evidence that the blood on the Shroud of Turin is of human origin. While the majority of serological data support the idea that the blood is (at least) primate, only a single (brief) study directly addresses the issue of the human nature of the bloodstains." Forensic tests have failed to show that it is real blood and real human blood at that.

#There is a lot of sodium, chlorine and potassium in real blood. There is none of them in the shroud blood.

#The blood is picture-like. It does not matter if it is blood or not. It is a warning sign that it does not look like real world blood but like a picture of blood.

#The blood should not be so well organised on the cloth. Where are the smears? If it is real blood, it is still not Jesus' for it would be one messy image if it were after all he allegedly went through. The person put the blood on and hung the cloth up to dry. That cannot be denied. It is clear the cloth may even have been originally meant to have been taken as an icon rather than a fake shroud for a faker had no reason to worry about smears.

#The shroudman's head was supposedly wrapped in the Sudarium of Oveido prior to burial in the Shroud. But the Sudarium does not have reddish blood!

#The research proving that the same person was wrapped in both is based on fantasy. The Sudarium should have smeared the blood a lot but there is no smearing on the face of the Shroud man.

#Jesus could not have bled after death. Some of the marks could be explained without it being bleeding- eg seeping out of wounds from previous bleeding - but others can't.

#The dried blood on the arms is displayed as been wet when it transferred to the cloth.

#There is believed to be no image behind the blood so the blood went on first so how did the image manage to line up so well to the borders established by the blood? The cloth should have moved just by the body sinking a bit and should have sank itself.

#The strangeness of the shroud is unsurprising considering we have nothing similar to compare it to. Believers like to talk about the strangeness and argue it shows Jesus probably lay in the cloth. But that is illogical. Nothing is normal about the shroud and we are to believe a normal man was laid in it? It is too odd to say it was a real shroud.

MC CRONE

The blood contains paint ingredients. The claim that these ingredients do not come from the blood but from paintings being touched to the cloth is far-fetched.

The research of Walter McCrone has shown that the cloth is a painting and that the blood is really just paint but it seems that McCrone MAY have been too keen to refute the authenticity of the Shroud. His tests showed the presence of a lot of paint on the cloth. He found the blood to have the pigment red ochre and could not find it outside the image proving that the claim of believers that this pigment came of pictures and paintings placed on the Shroud to make them relics is nonsense (page 27, Looking for a Miracle). The poker holes on the cloth proved that it was not immune to damage. There was no way then that people would have been allowed to put damp pictures on the cloth and the practice of the Church usually was to create relics just by touching a cloth or item to a holy object. Relics of St Padre Pio are just touched to his tomb.

BLOOD OR NOT?

Is the red stuff on the Shroud really blood? It isn't easy to think that it is for it has remained red. The blood on Jesus would have dried fast in the warm climate and little of it would have transferred to the cloth but the shroud man has plenty of fresh blood!

The pro-authenticity shroud site <http://www.skepticalspectacle.com> explains that the linen was starched on the loom and then washed in suds of a plant called Soapwort. This soap contains haemolytic chemicals which keep blood red. The blood on the shroud it says contains loads of bilirubin which is a bile pigment produced by a body that had undergone a severe physical trauma. This pigment is red and doesn't lose its redness. So the believers have two explanations for the blood being red. The site, thank goodness, says that the Shroud is natural and denies that radiation from the resurrection put the image on for radiation can't do that. At least it disposes a lot of the nonsense spouted by scientists who are more concerned with promoting fake incentives to Christian belief than the truth. It says the shroud is a photograph but rejects this on the basis that nobody could have made one like it long ago and because a second face has been found on the cloth – the latter is inconclusive. We can take this admission to be very significant and we will see why later.

We must remember that whoever made the Shroud did a lot of experimenting and probably tried to make a shroud image from a pierced body. He would have known about the bilirubin thing and may have used real blood with some additives in it. If the Shroud was starched then how did it fit into the contours of the body so well to pick up images and blood?

It is said that the blood of a person who dies in great trauma can stay red. But that only happens extremely rarely among people who suffer bloodshed. And even then most of the blood goes brown or red in time. It is too hard to believe that Jesus would be "lucky" enough to produce blood that stays red for two millenia! There is no example old enough to verify that it is possible.

Also, considering how hot it was in Palestine the time Jesus supposedly died the blood would have rotted fast. Jesus' blood died long before he died. It would not have stayed red.

The shroud examiner, Alan Adler, the Jewish blood chemistry expert, was only giving his opinion that if a person suffers great illness or dies in huge trauma that the blood could be gorged with bilirubin and keep red looking forever.

Alan Adler alleged that the shroud man's blood was tested and it did show incredibly high amounts.

A test was administered by Adler who tested the "blood" on a fibril of the linen in a protease to see if the protein would dissolve to see if it really was blood. It did but other organic substances can do the same so it proves nothing (page 193, Turin Shroud).

Also, no image was found underneath when the blood was scraped off. This test also fails to prove that there really is no image underneath the blood. The scraping was too small and the image is hardly distinguishable from the cloth around it in most places anyway.

Since many fibres of the cloth don't have the image though surrounded by ones that have, nobody knows for sure if the image exists under the blood marks. The iron and the DNA on the Shroud can be accounted for without it necessarily being blood. It is safe to assert that the presence of blood has not been proven and is very unlikely. It is possible and feasible that the pious rich people who had the Shroud in the past might have put some of their own blood on it thinking that part of them would be close to and mingle with the blood of Jesus.

If the Shroud image is a scorch or photograph the blood could have been painted or printed or both on first and the light reflected on it to make an image to fit the wounds. Those who say it is not a scorch or a painting or a rubbing compare it to images made by these methods. Then they find some differences and deny that any of these explains it. But it will not be the same - the image is hundreds of years old! If you went in a time machine and compared the shroud as it is now to what it used to be you will find differences too!

The Shroud is most probably down to scorch marks. A forger was using a heated bas relief statue to make the image.

Some think it is a photo of a statue.

But whatever. Maybe the blood could have helped position where the image was going to be projected on to so that both picture and blood would be positioned right. The image was then projected over the blood to match their position. This would leave no image underneath the blood which is what they say they find on the Shroud – a real miracle would be able to project the image behind the blood marks. They say that if this happened we would be saying the image was painted first so that the painter would know exactly where to put the blood. But then God could always find something in the complicated world of chemistry to puzzle us.

Cesare Nosiglia, Archbishop of Turin has dismissed new findings "authenticating" the Shroud of Turin on the basis that shroud researchers such as Professor Fanti were possibly using "blood" samples from the shroud that may have been inauthentic. The shroudie story is that they were left over from other tests done in the past. The Archbishop would wonder why it is only shroud believers that seem to find them! Stephen Jones and other shroud believers, with a stubbornness reminiscent of the Medjugorje supporters of a blatantly fake apparition, simply accuse the Archbishop of lying! To cite shroud devotee Stephen Jones: "It is bad enough that this current Turin Archbishop is continuing in the telling of a lie about the matter, but it is even worse that he is in effect accusing Prof. Fanti of scientific fraud."

The fact remains that believers are assuming that the red crusts they find on the shroud are blood. They still fail all of the microscopical, chemical, biological, and instrumental tests for blood.

It is good though that shroud believers if they are tampering do not have the nerve to use actual blood samples from elsewhere but use something they can pass off as blood to the believers. They know that the matter is best left without hard "proof" of blood. The world would want to know why suddenly after years of testing the finding of blood is now definite!!

Note:

Diane Soran tested the notion that the reason the blood stayed red was because the cloth was given a good wash in a hemolytic called saponaria - soapwort. She made linen samples and the blood on them stayed red after more than two decades.

Sam Pellicori said that the blood on the top of the image is red because of that substance on top of the fibres stayed red due to evaporation but inside the fibre it went brown.

These tests are unscientific and dubious. And since when does 25 years of red blood on a cloth prove that a cloth could have red blood for two thousand years?

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