

## **SHROUD OF TURIN IF GENUINE THEN REFUTES THE MIRACLE RESURRECTION OF JESUS FOR IT SAYS JESUS COULD HAVE SURVIVED THE CROSS AND EVEN THE TOMB!**

In the Cathedral of Turin what many people hold to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ is enshrined. The Shroud is around fourteen feet by three and a half feet. It is a sheet of linen. It looks like a big strip that covered the back and front of a man completely. The image it bears is supposed to be the imprint of the dead wounded (however on close examination nobody knows if there are really any big wounds on the man. You see blood positioned where the wounds are alleged to be. But deep perforations are not evident) and bloody body of Jesus Christ.

It is accepted that it matches the four gospels in so far as it apparently depicts a crucified Jesus nailed through the wrists and the feet, pierced through the side, who was scourged and beaten and forced to wear a crown of thorns. I would differ in relation to the nail wounds. Even the gospels never clearly state that Jesus was nailed. Some crucifixion victims were simply tied to the cross. Only John seems to say Jesus had pierced hands that may or may not have been nailed. There is no mention at all of the feet being nailed.

There are mysteries about the shroud that seem to be miracles. If they are then what about the mysteries surrounding the cloth that don't fit miracles? Are they not miracles in reverse? Who says a miracle has to always inspire you what to believe? It may inspire you what NOT TO BELIEVE! An example is the hair sitting as if the man is not lying down as the body suggests but standing up. It's a total contradiction. Another example is the image, if it truly cannot be reproduced by science, fading. The fading shows that the reason for the reproduction issue is the passage of time and wear and tear and its a miracle for a miracle image to fade! What about the blood showing the man is not dead if other evidence on the cloth says he is? The shroud is an argument not for miracles but for confusion on the subject of miracle. For that reason alone it makes us doubt the miracle of Jesus' resurrection.

The Christians say that an empty tomb alone does not indicate a resurrection. Neither do grave-cloths being found folded in the tomb - read the gospel of John for that. Neither do visions of a risen Jesus. But they say the three together amount to a reasonably compelling case.

Blood ran out of the body after being entombed and even scratches were bleeding. This does mean if the cloth is real that Jesus was buried alive but did he survive? Should he have died in the tomb?

Even John who says that Jesus was thrust with a spear after he seemed to have died causing blood and water to emerge doesn't say that this was necessarily fatal or intended to make sure that Jesus was dead. Perhaps the soldier who did this was told to do it to fit a prophecy quoted by John from the Old Testament that they will look on the one they have pierced. It is more probable that John made it up.

If the blood and water really came out as described in John surely Jesus would have been stabbed a second time to make sure he was dead for blood means the person is still alive. The Shroud man just has the one stab wound. And the wound as depicted on the Shroud need not have been fatal so it was not intended as a death stab (page 249, The Jesus Conspiracy). The word used for the wound was nyssein which means a light puncture (ibid). When Jesus bled so much from a light wound he had to have been alive.

The side wound need not have been fatal (page 291, The Jesus Conspiracy). It is improbable that it would have cut the heart (ibid). The Shroud endeavours to give the impression that there was no need to think the man was dead.

It is tempting to believe that when the John gospel said that an eyewitness saw the side being wounded and blood and water coming out and stressed that his testimony was true as if there was something strange about it that this is a hint that it was indeed strange that anything came out of the wound at all. Some thought that the blood and water was a miracle but the gospel gives us no reason to think that. The witness couldn't believe that Jesus was bleeding for he thought Jesus was dead. Another possibility is that he talks the way he does, referring to an anonymous and therefore useless witness, is that the side wound was never heard of until this gospel was written! He was making it all up or reporting hearsay which is just as bad. Either way the resurrection is refuted. If Jesus got a light side wound or no wound at all, then the vast surprise that Pilate felt when Jesus was reported to have died so soon that is recorded in Mark is explained. It makes us wonder if he was really dead. The gospels imply that nothing Jesus went through need have killed him. They say Pilate liked him and so the scourging might not have been too bad. It was Pilates plan to scourge him and then let him go a free man. They say too that Jesus didn't have to carry the cross much. Simon of Cyrene carried it for him a lot of the way. If Jesus was as robust as the Shroud man looks it seems impossible that he could have died so soon.

The Roman soldiers are said to have refrained from the norm of breaking the legs of the crucifixion victims to make them die quicker in the case of Jesus. They didn't bother, so the gospel tells us, because he was already dead. But these men must have been familiar with men who were crucified and who passed out and seemed dead. They would still have had to break their legs in case. If Jesus had been stabbed instead of having his legs broken that would destroy a lot of the meaning of his execution. He claimed to be king which insulted Caesar and an example and deterrent had to be made of him. He could get no special treatment. If the soldiers didn't want to make sure Jesus was dead by breaking his legs then they didn't want to kill him with the stab wound either.

The Shroud image is not made entirely of blood but consists of some blood marks and the rest is something that has been superficially put onto the cloth. This makes some think that the washing of the body removed the clots and dried blood causing a little blood and serum to seep out after the body was put in the cloth (page 215, *The Divine Deception*). This would involve a violent scrubbing. The disciples of Christ would not have been so irreverent. And they would have found it hard to wash for once the scabs would come off and new blood would seem to be coming they would have had to wash until it stopped, which it soon would for dead men don't bleed. The blood should be running into and mixing with the water on the body and turning into light liquid. None of these things happened. The "blood" on the cloth is bright red and is too strong of a colour to have had any watering down. So the Shroud man was not washed. The only way they could avoid any smears of blood and water would be to wash the body entirely until all the exposed wounds were cleaned and had nothing left to issue. But the Shroud man is clean and has blood from various wounds.

The Shroud man has twenty-eight wounds, only a few of them present as major ones, that bled into the cloth (page 294, *The Jesus Conspiracy*). A dead man might lose blood from the pull of gravity but it will be extremely small for there is no heart beating to get more out. And it will seep out of big wounds only but the Shroud man has many small bleeding cuts. The Shroud man has lost a lot of blood for a dead man after burial. Also, blood might come from a corpse that was wounded in an area of hypostasis or if blood gathered near a wound so that it could burst out through the clots. The profuse bleeding of the side wound of the Shroud man cannot be explained by either of these so it must have been a living man (page 292, *The Jesus Conspiracy*).

Blood that should have been dried like the scourge wounds and many others should not be on the cloth and certainly not on it so clearly. They are the exact same stains you would expect from a live man.

Tests have been done by Professor Zugibe to try and show how a dead body with wounds could put marks on a cloth like the Shroud but these marks are nothing like the quality of the Turin Shroud marks (page 216, *The Divine Deception*). If there had been a body in the Shroud the blood should be distorted and way off the image due to the cloth being wrapped around. But on the Shroud there is no distortion of the blood and it appears on the image where you would expect to see it on a picture of the body. Do believers want us to think that Jesus was put into a shroud that was as stiff as cardboard? The lack of serious distortion in the image seems to want them to!

The Catholic booklet, *The Holy Shroud and Four Visions* maintains that dried blood can transfer to a cloth if there is plenty of sweat or the relevant chemicals that compose sweat in the blood. It seems the booklet sought to offset suspicions that Jesus was buried alive and bleeding. But the transference the way booklet thinks it happened takes time but waiting too long is as bad as not waiting long enough. When the image is ready, the cloth has to be removed slowly and with extra-caution from the blood and no folding must take place for a long time so that the image is not damaged (page 13). This would suggest that somebody had been experimenting years ago to learn this in order to make the Turin Shroud. Some would say it means that Jesus' body just gently dematerialised inside the cloth resulting in an undamaged image.

Some think there is a trail of blood that was evidently intended to show that Jesus started bleeding again after the nails were pulled out of his wrists (page 188, *Jesus Lived in India*). There would have been big streams of blood that ran from the hand wounds down to the elbows and beyond if this man were really Jesus Christ due to the way he was hung on the cross. Blood did run down the arms but from the scourging for it did not connect with the nails and the stains are too narrow.

Either the blood was put on the man's wrist or he was not nailed long enough to bleed much. Jesus was on the cross three hours. The *Jesus Conspiracy* says that there are three lines of blood relating to the wrist wound and tries to argue that two of them dried up and were made liquid again by the oils in the cloth because the outline is not as sharp as that of the third. But if you look at photograph no 57 some parts of the two traces in question have just as much lack of outline as the third. There is no evidence of burial oils and spices on the cloth. And the marks could still have been made at the one time. They should not have been!! They do not really look as if they came out at different times. And why is there no smearing from the cross beam?

The possibility that Jesus was buried alive would explain how he could have been taken from the tomb. Even the gospels do not pretend to know why Jesus body was not in the tomb. A stolen body could still rise again. The *Jesus Conspiracy*, *Jesus Lived in India* and *The Turin Shroud is Genuine* would tell us that Jesus lived long after his crucifixion. That may spoil a lot of things for the theory that Jesus was buried alive and rescued from the tomb if Jesus couldn't have lived too long after. Jesus might not have lived long assuming that his limbs were dislocated. Plus his hands would have been

unusable due to the nails cutting his nerves. But the wounds and the side wound and the fact that Jesus didn't have to carry his cross all the way show he could have survived the crucifixion. And the spices were medicinal and would have prevented infection. The jury is out on this one. But it seems that to suggest that Jesus started meeting up with the disciples again soon after the crucifixion and was even walking about hours after the tomb was found empty and was seen by Magdalene is absurd. However absurd or not, it has nothing to do with proving or disproving the survival of the crucifixion theory. Visions are only visions. They prove nothing. And Jesus' post-resurrection appearances were said to be visions.

The idea that rigor mortis set in on the Shroud man and that this can be seen in the image is simply imagination (page 281, *The Jesus Conspiracy*). It is easy to see what you want to see. It is assumed perhaps because of the way the arms are so well positioned all by themselves but then they were positioned like that from the start – before any rigor mortis could have set in. The man in the cloth looks at peace.

In a dead person lying on their back the weight seems to sink down to the ground. The Shroud man showed no sign of this for the image is as strong at the front as the back. The back image doesn't look like the sinking caused by dead weight happened. He was alive.

Experts deny that Jesus would have produced enough sweat to impose an image. He wouldn't even take a drink so he had no liquid in him. There is no evidence that Jesus would have been dehydrated. Refusing wine is hardly a sign that he would not take water. And what if the Shroud man has no sweat and Jesus would have had or vice versa?

Sweat has been shown by Shroud believer Stephen Mattingly to make an image in the same way as the image on the Shroud was made and made an image this way using his own body and sweat and the bacteria that is in sweat. Clearly if Jesus sweated so much into the cloth he must have been alive in the cloth. Those who realise this argue, "But the image made by Mattingly is distorted while the Shroud image is not. Granted, sweat can do that but the distortion proves that some other process made the image." But does that rule out sweat as an explanation? No. The strangeness of the image does not rule sweat out because if the sweat creation theory were proven it would not stand against it. If kindly saintly John murders Mary you don't argue that there must have been another explanation just because he is too good to have done such an awful thing. The strangeness is a separate issue in both cases. Since the cloth is meant to hold the image and body fluids of Christ it is possible that the maker used sweat to make the image of Jesus. Perhaps it was applied with a sponge. If Jesus made the image inadvertently or otherwise clearly the image was meant to be one created by sweat. Whether it is sweat or not cannot be proven, but if the image was the result of sweat from a body inside it then it really was the image of a living man who sweated into the cloth. Or was the sweat printed on to the cloth and then a living person lay on the cloth without staining it to "fix" the sweat?

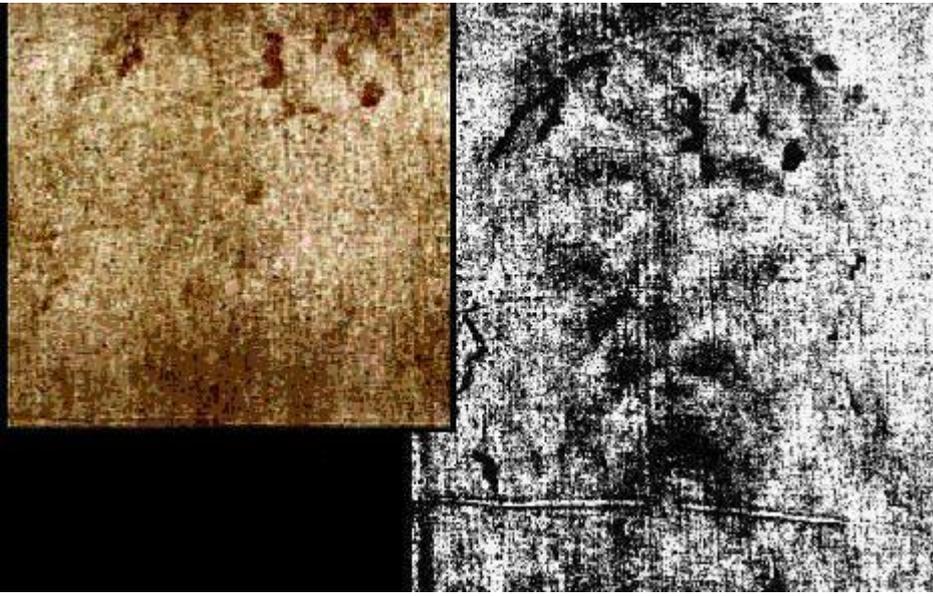
Whether the image was made from vapours coming off a body or sweat the fact that the hands and feet the cooler parts of the body were able to project the image would indicate that the blood was still circulating inside the body (page 69, *The Turin Shroud is Genuine*). It is far more rational and easier to explain the Shroud image assuming a body lay in it as being down to processes generated by the life that was still extant in the man.

The vaporographic theory of Professor Paul Vignon proved that an image with many of the strangest characteristics of the shroud image could be made by sweat and vapours coming from a dead body. The theory was rejected in 1933 because a corpse could not make the image but a living body could for a corpse does not sweat or emit heat. So the theory was rejected just because it did not fit the consensus that Jesus died on the cross (page 159, *Jesus Lived in India*). The vaporographic theory is not the only possible explanation for the image but if it works then it shows that a living man was used to create the Shroud and if Jesus did die on the cross the man was not Jesus. The man must have had a huge temperature and been far from dying when he created that image. Joe Nickell rejects the vaporographic theory for vapours go in all directions while in the case of the Shroud they would have had to project up from the body vertically and straight to make a remarkably though not completely undistorted image. His experiments verified this (page 23, *Looking for a Miracle*). The theory would work if it had not been for that.

So whatever the truth is it is clear that if we want a miracle then the vapours are it. They came from a living body and against physics they went up directly and made the image on the cloth and even on non-contact points that were inches away. And what they show is that Jesus did not die on the cross. But it is important to remember that the only problem with the theory is that Jesus's image is too clear to be caused by vapours which rise up like gases and cause a messy image. It gives sufficient proof that we should expect a natural explanation for the Shroud image and that this one if wrong still points us in the right direction. We have to keep looking.

Religion says that it is because we firmly believe God has regulated the way nature works that we can recognise a miracle or an exception to that regularity. If so, then if you need a miraculous explanation you must choose the necessary one. For example, if the image is a miracle then assume the vapours miraculously made the image and that the miracle was solely in how they made a clear image. Miraculous ideas about radiation are too much and too speculative.

A second face similar to the first but with important differences as if the man had moved his face between imprints has been found on the Shroud. A dead man moving his face? We don't think so!



Jesus being buried alive would mean that the gospels are wrong that he died on the cross. It would mean that when their sources never saw his death or testified to it but only thought they did that makes the resurrection look silly. Jesus would not do this miracle of resurrection for the gospels and the witnesses unless he made sure he could prove his death first. The early Christians felt that God revealed that Jesus died on the cross. If they were wrong about that they could hardly be depended on in relation to other religious matters particularly the resurrection. It would explain why there were so many medicinal herbs and spices put on his body according to the New Testament (page 237, *The Jesus Conspiracy*). It would show they knew he wasn't dead. Perhaps Jesus was alive long enough after being taken from the tomb to be put on a throne wearing a white robe with concealed wounds and presented as resurrected to his followers. This would get around the objection that a sick man couldn't pass for a resurrected one. This appearance could have led to the disciples feeling confident that seeing Jesus in their imagination was as real of a vision so he might only have needed to be seen once.

The gospels say the Shroud of Jesus was found and kept. This would mean that somebody went into the tomb and stole the body and left the cloths behind to create a mystery.

Whoever took the Shroud had no right to. This was theft. It is theft to steal evidence from the scene of a crime. The person or persons responsible would have taken the body just as easily.

It is undeniable that whatever happened, the Turin Shroud is not evidence for the resurrection but evidence against it.