

Jesus' hair versus the authenticity of the Turin Shroud

The Turin Shroud is supposedly Jesus' burial shroud. The image has long tidy hair.

If Jesus suffered being hit around the head and dragged through the streets and forced to wear a crown of thorns and would have had his hair pulled as part of the torture, it would be a miracle if he were the man on the shroud.

The Bible calls Jesus a Nazarene which some take to mean Nazarite and Nazarites were not allowed to cut their hair at all (Numbers 6:5). So the Shroud man's long hair would mean he could be Jesus. But Jesus may have been a Nazarite temporarily in accordance with Numbers 6:5 or he may have called himself a Nazarene but followed his own rules about what he thought this meant so he might not have been recognised officially as one. Jesus would have been more interested in the spiritual side of being a Nazarene and knowing him he would have cut his hair in defiance of the rule that it should be cut.

Some say that Jesus was always called the Nazarite implying that he was a permanent one. The gospels say he was called that because he came from the town of Nazareth. Perhaps those who called him that were being sarcastic because Jesus had been a Nazarite. But during his ministry he certainly was not a Nazarite for he touched a bier on which a dead boy was laid out and he drank wine both of which Nazarites were forbidden to do.

The hair is long. Would St Paul have condemned long hair in men as effeminate if Jesus' had been long? The Catholic answer is that he could have for he wrote some years after Jesus died and was just giving his own personal opinion. But condemning long hair as unnatural when the Old Testament forbade a man to put on a dress would tell us that he was not giving his own preference but stating what he thought God wanted in accordance with his biblical belief that the Old Testament was never wrong even in its rigid distinction about what was proper for a man to do and a woman. And the time after Jesus' death is irrelevant. If Paul had made a mistake he would soon have erased that bit. Wilson would object that long hair was the tradition among orthodox Jews and the Shroud-man has the hair at the back like something that had been up in a plait which was the fashion in Jesus' time (page 49, *The Blood and the Shroud*). But Jesus detested man-made Jewish tradition and would have carefully avoided anything that looked as if he supported it.

There is just no reason to believe that Jesus had long hair at the time he was crucified. Had he been a Nazarite but not for months his hair would have been grown back at that time.

The Shroud man's hair at the back was laid out perfectly and it tapered into a point at the bottom. Why would the people who buried Jesus have been so careful with his hair? This indicates that the image was intended for display and was not the real Shroud. If the head were cut off as many things indicate, it would have been more likely for the hair to be laid out properly before the body was laid in the Shroud.

The hair and the beard hang down as if the man was standing up in the shroud. The hair would not be doing that if the man were lying down and the beard would have been pushed against the chin and throat under the weight of the cloth but it hangs down straight as it would if Jesus were standing erect. The beard is just too tidy as well. The Christians object that the hair and beard were stiff with dried blood so they stayed in the position they were in when he was upright on the cross. But the hair is still too straight for Jesus would have hung his head down at times and rested it on the left shoulder and on the right shoulder which would change the way the hair would set. And the hair on the Shroud man just has specks of blood on it and is not matted with blood. Close up the hairs look mostly clean. They look like they don't have a crusted total cover of blood over them and as if they had been saturated with blood. The lies the Christians tell to support the Shroud are truly tiresome. The hair proves the man on the cloth was not Jesus Christ.

The excuse for the hair hanging down is conclusively disproved by the fact that the hair was laid out and tapered at the back and tidied up. This manipulating of the hair showed that it would have been made manageable. Those who buried the man were anxious to have his hair right. They were not the burial party of the gospels who buried Jesus nearby for they were in a hurry as the day of rest was imminent. If the Shroud man was buried, he was buried by people who had plenty of time. He was buried by people who must have intended to form a shroud image. That is too improbable. The way the hair is on the Shroud proves it is dubious for it is too deliberate. Somebody was trying to make an image - a forger.

The BBC program *Son of God* shown at Easter 2001 said it was universally accepted that the style of short hair among men was uniform in Jesus' time and long after for fashions changed slowly.

The Shroud is like a photographic negative. The positive image of the Shroud when it is photographed demonstrates that

the man had white hair and a white beard (page 18, Sceptical Inquirer, Vol 25, No 5). Yet the gospels say Jesus was a Jew meaning his hair would have been dark and died when he was in his early thirties. Parts of the hair and beard are darker than the body meaning they must have been a very light colour or white (page 184-5, The Divine Deception). If the hair was lightened with chalk powder that would indicate forgery.

The hair makes it unlikely or impossible that the Shroud man was Jesus.