

HOW OLD IS THE TURIN SHROUD?

The Turin Shroud, reputed to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ, was carbon dated in 1988 to having been made between 1260 and 1390 AD. Speculation not proof challenges those results. So its too young to be the burial cloth of Jesus. This has not stopped religious cranks from trying to prove the cloth is older than that. One method they use to prove this is from the existence of the Shroud in historical records before that time. The other is seeing if the way the Shroud was made matches what we know about how things were made in first century Palestine. But sadly for them, we can prove that they are just fantasists.

The gospels say that Jewish burials had the face left bare with a cloth put over the face as the body was wrapped up in stripes and that Jesus was buried according to the Jewish custom (John 19:40). There have been attempts to deny that Jesus was strictly buried in this method or that there were a variety of Jewish methods. But when the John gospel describes the burial of Lazarus buried with a bare face that a cloth was put on and then says Jesus was buried the Jewish way then clearly John means Jesus was buried that way too. We know that from the fact that his gospel was meant for non-Jews. He wanted to inform non-Jews.

WHERE WAS IT BEFORE 1355?

The existence of the Shroud is not even mentioned in early Christian writings and what is mentioned in the gospel is certainly not what is now the Turin Shroud. For centuries after the Christian faith inflicted itself on the world nobody said that the Shroud still existed. Here is a quote: The provenance of the Shroud is very shaky because the earliest written record about it is the reference to the origin of the image from Bishop D'Arcis who wrote a letter to Pope Clement VII that the picture on the Shroud is a forgery and that the forger has confessed that it was a 'painted' picture. Quote from The Shroud of Turin!! Is it Genuine or is it a Forgery? Dr Johnson C Philip, Dr Saneesh Cherian, Edited by Gregory Anderson. Creative Commons. Copyright Philip Communication. First Edition 2014.

The excuses for it not being mentioned are just speculation.

OTHER CLAIMS

Shroudies make a lot of noise about alleged pollen from Jerusalem and coins from the time being marked on the shroud and it goes on and on. But as usual with every supernatural claim there is a whole supermarket of rival claims. For example, on the website Apollonius of Tyana and the Shroud of Turin there is a series of photos of a bust of Apollonius with each photo of the bust carrying a heavier superimposition of the face of the Shroud man. The result is that the face of the bust looks exactly like the man on the Shroud. This would mean that the pagan god Apollonius was the same person as Jesus or perhaps that Apollonius had a twin brother who masqueraded as Jesus. This bust is preserved in Naples and it is likely that Apollonius got his brother a sculptor to make the bust. Both bust and Shroud man have a scar above the left eye... (www.apollonius.net/bust-shroud.html). If Jesus was Apollonius then he survived the crucifixion for Apollonius died in 97 AD.

It has been claimed that the Shroud bears images of Jerusalem flowers and nails and scores of other things (page 20, Skeptical Inquirer, Vol 25, No 5). People think they can read Jesus' name on it. These things are dismissed by the best pro-Shroud scholars. You can see anything you want on the Shroud just like you can think the moon has a man's face. We are programmed to see pictures where there are none. But if the Shroud really shows the image of a nail, the sign that was over Jesus' head, and the dice used by the soldiers then it is a fake. What would all these items be doing in the tomb? They belonged to the Romans. Some argue that because the sign has not produced inverted lettering on the Shroud which it should do it must be fake (page 242, The Divine Deception). Believers argue that the sign was done in Hebrew, Latin and Greek in mirror writing and that is the explanation! Are they mad?

THE HUNGARIAN CODEX



The believer says the Hungarian codex from 1192-5 AD before the time the carbon dating says the shroud cloth was made depicts a cloth with the same weave as the shroud. From this its said that the dating must be wrong for the



Shroud must have been seen by the artist who made the picture in the codex.

To get to that conclusion, believers presume that the item in the second picture is the Shroud though it cannot be. The shroud is lying on top of it messed up. The item is a lid and is rigid. It has holes but holes are depicted on the sarcophagus too. The stepped pattern is just a pattern and yet they say it is the herringbone pattern of the Shroud. It only superficially looks like the Shroud pattern. There is no image of Jesus imprinted. The picture is not meant to be taken too seriously as there would have been no crosses on Jesus's tomb. Jesus in the picture above it lies in a tiny shroud and has no blood. There is more reason to deny that there is any link to the Shroud than to say there is.

Despite recent attempts to prove that the herringbone pattern of the Shroud was used in first century Palestine the fact remains that the pattern was common in the middle ages. The Jesus Conspiracy, in a futile attempt to prove that the carbon dating of pieces of the Shroud was a hoax claiming that pieces of another cloth with herringbone pattern were used instead at least showed that the pattern wasn't unique to the Shroud (page 78, The Jesus Conspiracy).

HENRY AND D'ARCIS

It is held by shroud believers that there is no concrete evidence that the Shroud existed before the mid-1350s when it was seemingly fully exposed in the Church at Lirey. But they assume there were indications that it may have done. Sceptics say the Shroud was forged about that time.

The Lirey Shroud was exposed as a cunningly painted fake by the bishops, Henry and D'Arcis. We have their letters.

The letters say the artist was identified and as the image was not a normal painting he had to demonstrate how he did it. This sounds like the Turin Shroud which does not look like it was painted except perhaps for the blood.

The letters corroborate the carbon dating.

CONCLUSION

There is no evidence from history that the carbon dating is incorrect. The evidence provided by those who disagree is deception and imagination. The Turin Shroud is most probably a forgery from 1260 to 1390. Would the Jesus of the gospels who said that if your neighbour takes from you what you need give him more than that and go the extra mile if a Roman soldier who is your enemy urges you to carry his pack leave behind a relic that has cost the world millions of dollars in tests and debates and time to work out if the cloth is real or not? I don't think so.

Even if the cloth is strange and inexplicable and even if there is real blood on it, it still does not give us any reason to think these effects came from a body. The image does not carry the huge distortions that would be seen if a body had lain in it and imprinted the images. The image has nothing to do with proving the existence or resurrection of Jesus Christ.