

NAME: Ben Wiech, Attorney, U.S.A.

Questions:

1. **When** and **how** did you first hear about the Shroud?

I first heard of the Shroud in 1985. At the time, I was an atheist for about ten years. I was in the library and had to find a book before closing time. I grabbed one that looked interesting---REPORT ON THE SHROUD OF TURIN by Dr. John Heller, the story of the scientific testing of the Shroud that began in 1978. I was under the belief that the Shroud had been proved a forgery but the book might be interesting anyway.

I was only a short way into the book when I got that "something big is about to happen" feeling. To my surprise, the Shroud wasn't painted after all. The image was the result of some unique interaction between the cloth and a real body. It was easy to conclude that the body had to be Jesus of Nazareth and the interaction had to have been the resurrection event. The science of the Shroud convinced me that Jesus rose from the dead.

2. What interested you about the Shroud?

All humans are interested in the "who, what, where, when, why of life." The Shroud is the key that unlocks all the answers. It tells us that we have a powerful benevolent creator-redeemer who loves us and is going to make it all work out.

3. Do you believe the Shroud is likely the burial cloth of Jesus Christ, a fake relic, or are you uncertain what to believe?

I am 100% certain that the Shroud is the cloth that wrapped the body of Jesus after his crucifixion and some energy from the body formed the image that we now see on the Shroud. I suppose it might be more reasonable to write that I am 99.9999999% certain of the Shroud's authenticity, but, in all honesty, I can't seem to work up even a .000000001%'s worth of doubt.

4. What, if any, actions did you take after you first encountered the Shroud (e.g., conduct research, contact people involved with it, etc.)?

After encountering the Shroud, I acted like somebody who just found a \$10 million winning lottery ticket on the sidewalk! I became a salesman with a great product to sell. I talked to everybody. I lectured on the Shroud. I went on radio. I read everything I could find on the Shroud. I debated Joe Nickell. I ordered books and pictures of the Shroud. I even ordered 30 copies of Dr. Heller's book to give away. I attended conferences, developed friendships with several Shroud researchers and engaged in thousands of hours of discussion

on the Shroud and its wonderful implications for all our lives.

5. Have you ever seen the Shroud at any of the exhibitions? If yes, which years?

I never saw the Shroud in person but am happy to see the great Shroud image in books, prints and films. I feel a sense of "wow" each and every time I look at the image.

6. What did you experience when you were in the presence of the Shroud?
n/a

7. Have you ever been involved in any scientific study of the Shroud? If yes, please describe **what motivated** your work and **why**.

I have not been involved in the scientific study of the Shroud but am happy stand behind the scientists who do study it and to shout out my encouragement and appreciation. Although more knowledge of the Shroud is a good thing, I feel we already know enough about the Shroud to allow a person to reach an informed judgment about its meaning.

8. Have you ever written anything about the Shroud, either factual or fictitious? If yes, please describe **what motivated** your work and **why**.

I wrote an article for SHROUD SPECTRUM in which I explain why portraits of Jesus that go back to the 7th and 8th century have an upside down "V" in the middle of the hairline. The same feature can be found on the Shroud but apparently I was the first to notice it and mention it in print. My article is support for the belief that the Shroud existed in the 600's and that artists at that time used the Shroud to influence their paintings and portraits.

9. Do you favor or believe any of the current theories on how the image got onto the cloth? If so please name the theory.

I am a fan of Dr. John Jackson's "cloth collapse" model. He theorized that the Shroud body changed into a radiation zone. The cloth started to fall downward and as the radiation zone and fibers interacted, the image was formed. Dr. Jackson predicted that we could find an image on the "other side" of the Shroud and ten years later, his prediction proved accurate. If his theory can make accurate predictions, I think it deserves serious consideration.

10. Do you feel that you have a calling or vocation to be involved somehow with the Shroud? If yes, please describe **what motivated** you to make a commitment to the Shroud and **why**.

I think all believers have a calling to share the "good news" of the Shroud with others. The Shroud can bring faith to those with none and can strengthen the faith of the faithful. The message of the Shroud, an endless happy existence after death with our loving creator, is so wonderful that I try to sell the message every chance I get. Telling people about the Shroud is like telling them there is a \$10 million winning lottery ticket on the sidewalk in front of them. All I do is yell: "PICK IT UP!"

Please describe below any other *personal* reflections, experiences, insights, or thoughts about the Shroud of Turin that you would like to share.

At the Richmond conference, the press descended on the conference looking for news. I told an acquaintance that the television people would come up with a teaser like: "SHROUDIES GET ROWDY....FILM AT 11." The line became my "catch line" and I repeated it hundreds of times.

A few years later, I went to Cleveland to hear Dr. John Jackson give a talk on the Shroud. A few days before I left, I told the internet Shroud Science Group about my trip and signed my letter: SHROUDIES GET ROWDY...FILM AT 11."

After checking into my Cleveland hotel, I drove to dinner. While sitting at a light, a car turned in front of me and for some reason, I glanced at its license plate. It read: FILM 11.

Writings/Websites/Blogs: