

**PUBLICATIONS (2)
VIDEOS**

Risen (Columbia Pictures)

A Grave Injustice (David Rolfe, shroud.enigma.com)

'Risen' is a well-received high-budget drama retelling the events after the death of Jesus from the point of view of a Roman soldier, played by Joseph Fiennes. It is described as original and inventive, but does not stray far from the biblical account. In detail it is both historically and archaeologically somewhat unsound, but no more so than many similar films. Its interest here is that it features the image on the Shroud, the first such film to do so specifically. However, the image seems to have caused the production team some problems. Here are three stills, taken from trailers for the film on YouTube.



The first shows the Shroud closely wrapped around the dead body of Jesus, although there is considerable doubt whether such an arrangement could have produced the 'photographic' image that we see today. The second image appears to show the image of the face as it is seen on the Shroud - but with a very white moustache rather than a dark one, and the third image (held in the hands of a couple of Romans) is simply the negative - the blood marks, for example, appearing most unnaturally white rather than dark.

Nevertheless, the appearance of the image of the Shroud at all is encouraging, and inspired David Rolfe, the award-winning producer of some of the most important films about the Shroud, to produce an up-to-

the-minute, quick fire documentary to whet the appetite of anyone who wanted to inquire further into what they'd seen.

'A Grave Injustice' succinctly presents most of the arguments supporting the authenticity of the Shroud, and in view of the fact that it is only twenty-seven minutes long can be forgiven for not discussing the contrary evidence, although it might have been fairer at least to mention that there is some. The film's principle feature is an overview of the clumsy disregard of the various protocols leading up to the radiocarbon dating in 1988, and, in spite of formally denying any impropriety on the part of the laboratories themselves, an attempt to show that the Shroud sample was insufficiently typical of the whole cloth for the radiocarbon date to be reliable. It has to be said that in spite of the conviction of the presenters the evidence for this is weak indeed, relying on impossible quantities of contamination and the unrealistically complicated splicing of new threads into old. The film also misrepresents Ray Rogers's findings about the solubility of the coatings he discovered. A brief account of Paolo di Lazzaro's experiments with laser radiation leads to the implication that only a miracle could have created the image, which is contentious. However after the science the film expands into broader terms, offering the Shroud as an ecumenical opportunity, illustrated by Barrie Schwartz's address to the Ahmadiyya Moslems' annual Jalsa Salana last year.

Subtitled 'An Investigation into the First Selfie', and narrated by an actor from the Harry Potter films, David Rolfe has clearly targeted a younger audience than most Shroud videos aim at, and the pirate copy on YouTube suggests some success, having received over a thousand views. A final mission statement: "There is no doubt that if the image purported to be a pharaoh, a warrior, an emperor or any other historical figure, the world of academia would not rest until they could understand it. Is Jesus of Nazareth too potent a figure for a scholar to tangle with?" coupled to a challenge to write to the radiocarbon laboratories, seems as good a way as any to try to reinvigorate interest in the Shroud. I hope it succeeds.

