

*The Coming of the Quantum Christ—The Shroud of Turin and the Apocalypse of
Selfishness, by John Klotz*

A BOOK REVIEW BY JACK MARKWARDT

Readers drawn to literary efforts which provide both intellectual stimulation and eclectic variety will undoubtedly enjoy *The Coming of the Quantum Christ—The Shroud of Turin and the Apocalypse of Selfishness*, a delightful concoction blended by its author, John Klotz, from such disparate ingredients as the environment, quantum mechanics, and a world-famous relic. As suggested by the book's title, Klotz contends that, unless humanity is somehow able to extract a *deus ex machina* from the depths of its collective self, it will be destroyed by the toxic products of its apparently limitless narcissism.

In view of the critical role which Klotz ascribes to the Shroud of Turin in his insightful analysis of the predicted cataclysm, he must convince his readers that it is the true burial cloth of Jesus Christ, and not, as many a modern skeptic would assert, either the extremely-clever handiwork of an anonymous medieval artist or the result of some unknown natural process. Therefore, Klotz draws upon his considerable experience as a practicing attorney to painstakingly marshal, and skillfully present, an impressive array of proofs in support of the relic's authenticity. In what essentially amounts to a closing statement to a jury, he first summarizes the observations of forensic and medical experts regarding the anatomical accuracy of the relic's wounded body image and then cites scientific experiments which determined this image to be superficial, negative, three-dimensional, and non-directional, and its apparent blood markings to consist of degraded hemoglobin and possess a "serum halo" discernible only under ultraviolet fluorescence. Finally, he seeks to discredit the radiocarbon dating of the linen to an earliest-possible date of 1260 by producing evidence of the image's existence during the preceding century, by challenging the methodologies employed in that testing, and by presenting the results of subsequent scientific examinations which concluded that the small section of cloth employed in the dating exercise was unrepresentative of the linen as a whole.

Along the page-turning way, Klotz provides entertaining and informative accounts of the relic's modern history, includes intriguing biographical and anecdotal narratives about Shroud researchers and conferences, explains the concept of inferential reasoning through an analysis of the lyrics of a once-popular song, demonstrates the difficulties inherent in establishing provenance by chronicling a particularly nasty dispute over a controversial work of art, and applies the principles of quantum mechanics to issues previously relegated to the realm of theology.

While he could well have addressed any number of non-authenticity arguments which have been raised over the years, Klotz, having arrived at a personal conviction that the Turin Shroud is genuine, elected to assume the role of an advocate for its authenticity, rather than that of a purveyor of all matters relevant to its possible provenance. In doing so, he has effectively thrown a gauntlet at the feet of his skeptical adversaries, challenging them either to concede that the renowned relic is indeed genuine or to submit a counter-closing argument, based upon relevant probative evidence, which not only establishes its medieval origin but also explains the manner in which its mysterious image was created.