

## ***“He Saw and Believed!”***

### **Is the Shroud of Turin in the Background of John’s Resurrection Narrative?**

**(John 20:1-10)**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The author of the Fourth Gospel spends ten verses telling the opening story about what the disciples first discovered on the morning of the Resurrection. Much of that narrative focuses on the funeral linens left behind in the empty tomb. Concerning those linens, we are told that the apostle John “saw and believed.” This paper will analyze this passage and strive to discern what exactly the writer intended for his readers to understand. Since this author believes the scientific<sup>2</sup> and historical<sup>3</sup> evidence for the Shroud of Turin is more than enough to conclude it is the authentic burial cloth of Jesus, he will explore the possibility of this text being a veiled reference to that Shroud.

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#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

What is so important about the “grave clothes” in John’s Gospel that *they* become the focal point of the empty tomb on the morning of the Resurrection? Specifically, four verses (vv. 5-8) are focused on the “linen wrappings” (τὰ ὀθόνια)<sup>4</sup> and the “face cloth” (σουδάριον).

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<sup>2</sup> Robert J. Spitzer, “Science and the Shroud of Turin,” *Magis Center of Reason and Faith* (May 2015) 1–33, accessed April 5, 2019, [https://2i7i0l43ftgic4pas6ndtk6b-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Science\\_and\\_the\\_Shroud\\_of\\_Turin.pdf](https://2i7i0l43ftgic4pas6ndtk6b-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Science_and_the_Shroud_of_Turin.pdf);

<sup>3</sup> Jack Markwardt, “Modern Scholarship and the History of the Turin Shroud,” *St. Louis International Shroud Conference* (October 2014), accessed April 22, 2019, <http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/stlmarkwardtpaper.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Due to the plural noun, “linen wrappings,” found here in the account of the Fourth Gospel, John Calvin rejected the idea that the Shroud of Turin might actually be the authentic burial “cloth” of Jesus. But the plural noun here should not cause a problem because (1) all three synoptic Gospels mention the single cloth (σινδών); (2) the plural noun could simply be referring to other “funeral linens” that were involved in the burial process—such as a head band, a face cloth, and thin strips used to wrap the feet and upper body once the corpse had been placed inside the long, single cloth (σινδών); and (3) Luke uses the same

Of note, it was something about the burial linens that gave birth to faith in the Resurrection for “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (the likely author of that Gospel)! Whereas Paul wrote that “faith comes by hearing,”<sup>5</sup> for that disciple faith came by seeing: “*He saw and believed*” (v. 8). [Traditionally that disciple has been identified with being the apostle John. So, we will go with that understanding hereafter.]

## 2. Textual Analysis

It is difficult to discern exactly what John is attempting to tell us about the grave clothes that caused him to believe Jesus had risen from the dead. The accomplished Greek scholar, A. T. Robinson, wrote of this text: “*The Greek is in fact extraordinarily elusive, considering the significance that the evangelist evidently attached to the detail. His expressions are so loose ...*”<sup>6</sup> There are questions we can be asking of this text that, unfortunately, cannot be answered with absolute certainty.

It is not my purpose to evaluate all the possible interpretations of this passage.<sup>7, 8</sup> Instead, I propose a rather simple conclusion drawn (1) from the text itself and (2) from

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plural noun (τὰ ὀθόνια), “funeral linens,” in his account of the Resurrection (24.12) after earlier speaking of the singular burial cloth (συνδών) or shroud (23.53). It would seem that this plural noun in Luke 23.53 is intended to include all the funeral or “linen wrappings” used in the burial process. Apparently τὰ ὀθόνια refers collectively to several cloths of various sizes. John uses a different word, κείρια, in describing the grave clothes of Lazarus (11.44). Carson describes that earlier burial in this manner: “*The corpse was customarily laid on a sheet of linen, wide enough to envelop the body completely and more than twice the length of the corpse. The body was so placed on the sheet that the feet were at one end, and then the sheet was drawn over the head and back down to the feet. The feet were bound at the ankles, and the arms were tied to the body with linen strips.... Jesus’ body was apparently prepared for burial in the same way (cf. 19.40; 20.5, 7).*” D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*. Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991) 418-19.

<sup>5</sup> Rom 10.17

<sup>6</sup> John A. T. Robinson, “The Shroud of Turin and the Grave-Clothes of the Gospels,” *Proceedings of the United States Conference of Research on the Shroud of Turin* (Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1977) 26.

<sup>7</sup> It is quite possible to make the matter overly complex and, thereby, confusing. This is particularly true regarding the options possible when interpreting the “face cloth” and its relationship to the earlier face cloth in the story of Lazarus (11.44). “Face cloth,” σουδάριον (soudarion), is derived from Latin and goes back to the word “sweat.” It was commonly used for a handkerchief,” or a cloth for wiping the perspiration from the face. [See Luke 19.20 and Acts 19.12. Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, n.d.) 581.] Even so, the Old Testament mentions how Ruth was asleep at the feet of Boaz, wrapped in a “cloak” (NASB) in which, the next morning, Boaz put six measures of barley. The Hebrew word is rare and unclear, but “*it appears to have been a large cloth*” since it held six measures of barley. [Robert L. Alden, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997) 2:928.] The Targum pseudo-Jonathan uses the Aramaic *soudara* here for this cloth of Ruth into which Boaz put six measures of barley (Ruth 3.15). That would seem to be a larger cloth than a mere handkerchief. [Guerrera, *The Shroud of Turin: A Case for Authenticity* (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books, 2001) 32.] Furthermore, the Greek word used in the Lazarus story for “face” (ὄψις) can also mean “outward appearance.” That latter meaning is best for John’s earlier usage of the word (7.44): “*Do not judge according to appearance* (ὄψις). Is John telling us that the *soudarion* wrapped the “outward appearance” of Lazarus? [W. Bauer, W.F.

clues obtained from (a) the prior story of Lazarus' burial<sup>9</sup> and (b) the stories immediately following this passage. Before stating my conclusion, three specific textual matters are striking and, therefore, should be noted.

First, there is a progression of interest and insight by Peter and John concerning the funeral linens. Not readily apparent in the English translation, four different Greek verbs for "looking" or "seeing" are used by the writer in relating this story. With each verb the level of interest increases:

- John "*stooping and looking in ...*" (v. 5) (παρακύψας).<sup>10</sup>

This verb is used to set the stage for the three different "to see" verbs that follow. Παρακύπτω means "to look at with head bowed forwards" or "to look into with the body bent." The idea here is "to look carefully into" or "to inspect curiously."<sup>11</sup> There is something to see inside the empty tomb and to grasp its significance!

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Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957) 606.] Thus, the unlikely case could be made that John is using soudarion (σουδάριον) for the sindon (σινδών) —the Shroud—of the Synoptic Gospels. While there is a degree of ambiguity, this writer is inclined to understand the term, σουδάριον, as used by John, for being the face cloth and not the Shroud. Two factors seem compelling in that regard: (1) σουδάριον is normally understood as a face cloth, or handkerchief, and (2) John clearly states "the soudarion had been upon (ἐπί) his head" (τὸ σουδάριον, ὃ ἦν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ). [Yet, to make the matter more confusing, even though ἐπί normally means "upon," in Homer's Iliad we do find ἐπ' Ἰφιδάμαντι for "over the body of Iphidamas" (Iliad 11.261; cf. 4:470). Henry George Liddel and Robert Scott, ἐπί, in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, accessed August 1, 2019, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=%E1%BC%90%CF%80%E1%BD%B6&la=greek#lexicon>.] My own view is that the burial Shroud is included in "the funeral linens" (τὰ ὀθόνια). But I certainly could be mistaken.

<sup>8</sup> Not only is there a degree of uncertainty regarding the "face cloth" (soudarion/σουδάριον), the exact identity of the "funeral linens" (ta othonia/τὰ ὀθόνια) is also uncertain. In particular, John makes no comment concerning the Shroud (sindon/σινδών) itself that we find mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels. Is that because (1) it is to be understood as being included in the "funeral linens" (τὰ ὀθόνια)? That answer has become the more prevalent understanding. Or, (2) is its absence due to the fact that Jesus had taken the Shroud with Him and, therefore, it was missing in the tomb along with His body? Luke's narrative (23.53; 24.12) could be read in support of option # 2. Furthermore, support for option # 2 could also be found with the statement in the very early apocrypha work, *The Gospel According to the Hebrews*, which states, after the Resurrection: "...*Now the Lord, when he had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, went to James and appeared to him.*" [Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, 2. See Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Christian Classics: Westminster, Maryland, 1992) 1:111.] It is commonly believed that Peter would have been "the servant of the priest," but that conclusion is uncertain. One problem with option # 2, though, is that John used a different word in the Lazarus narrative for the "strips of linen" (κερία) that bound his hands and feet (11.44). If John is only speaking of "linen strips"—for binding purposes—in both resurrection narratives, why the use of κερία in the story of Lazarus but an entirely different word, ὀθόνια, in the subsequent story about Jesus (20.5-7)?

<sup>9</sup> John 11.44

<sup>10</sup> This is an aorist participle of παρακύπτω.

<sup>11</sup> Thayer, "παρακύπτω," Greek-English Lexicon, 484.

- (John) ... was “seeing” ... (v. 5) (βλέπει).<sup>12</sup>

The present tense of this verb suggests an ongoing look, *not* simply one quick look and, “*It’s time to move on. Nothing to see here!*” What did John see? Interestingly, in the original text we are not told what it was he saw until *after* the present tense participle, “lying” (κείμενα). The object of what he was “seeing,” and what was “lying,” comes at the end of the clause: the funeral linens. It is worthy of note that “lying” is in an emphatic position in the Greek syntax. In addition, the verb “lying” occurs two more times in this brief passage (vv. 5, 6, 7). This verb is very important for what the writer is communicating.

- Peter, upon entering the tomb, was “beholding” or “observing” (θεωρεῖ)<sup>13</sup> the funeral linens (v. 6).

The Expositor’s Greek Testament comments: “*θεωρεῖ is probably used here in its stricter sense of seeing so as to draw conclusions.*”<sup>14</sup> Another resource states: “*θεωρέω indicates “the careful perusal of details in the object (seen).”*”<sup>15</sup> This verb can have the figurative meaning “to comprehend” or “to understand.”<sup>16</sup>

- Finally, we are told that John entered and “he saw and believed” (εἶδεν)<sup>17</sup> (v. 8).

Ὁράω serves well as a climax for all that has proceeded. This verb communicates the idea of “*mental and spiritual perception.*”<sup>18</sup> It is sometimes used for the “*supernatural.*”<sup>19</sup>

Second, we should take note of the fact that there is no object for the verb ὀράω in verse eight: “*He saw and believed!*” But what exactly did he see? We are not told!

- Is the absence of a specific object John’s way of tantalizing or hinting at the miraculous *image* which exists and that some people will later be fortunate

<sup>12</sup> This verb is a present active indicative of βλέπω.

<sup>13</sup> This verb is a present active indicative of θεωρέω.

<sup>14</sup> Marcus Dods, *The Expositor’s Greek Testament* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, n.d.) 1:862.

<sup>15</sup> W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1961) 338.

<sup>16</sup> K. Dahn, “See, Vision, Eye,” *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971) 3:512.

<sup>17</sup> This verb is a 2<sup>nd</sup>-aorist active indicative of ὀράω.

<sup>18</sup> Bauer, *Lexicon*, 581–82. In explaining Isaiah’s prophecy and the people’s lack of spiritual discernment, Jesus states: “*And you will keep on seeing (βλέπω), but will not perceive (ὀράω)*” (Matt 13.14).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. For example, Matthew uses ὀράω in relating the story of the Transfiguration (Matt 17.3, 5a, 5b, 8).

enough to see for themselves, assisting them in coming to faith—similar to the experiential story of Thomas that will soon follow (verses 26–31)?<sup>20</sup>

- Was the burial Shroud lying on the stone slab undisturbed, exactly as it had been before (bound with a couple of thin, linen wrappings), except now lying flat —“sunken down”<sup>21</sup>—without the body?
- Did the scene convey the conclusion that, somehow, the body had literally dematerialized and passed through the burial cloth to release itself from the bonds of death and imprisonment?<sup>22</sup>

Third, not only is the identity of the “face cloth” crucial in understanding this passage, but a *crux interpretum* concerns what one decides to do with the perfect tense of the verb “rolled up” (ἐντετυλιγμένον) in verse seven.

In their Greek grammar, Dana and Mantey remind us that “*It is best to assume that there is a reason for the perfect whenever it occurs,*” rather than the use of the simple aorist tense.<sup>23</sup> Another Greek grammarian states that, when a Biblical writer makes use of the perfect tense instead of the common past tense of the aorist, one “*ought, in every case, to look for a reason for one tense being used rather than the other.*”<sup>24</sup>

What is the significance of the perfect tense? The perfect tense:

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<sup>20</sup> The image on the Shroud of Turin is on the inside of the cloth. Therefore, it would not have been the image that the disciple saw. But omitting the object of the verb would be an effective way to cause readers who were familiar with the existence of the image to think of it as the object seen.

<sup>21</sup> Perhaps that is how the writer wants us to understand the present participle of that verb which he mentions three times (vv. 5, 6 & 7). “*The use of κείμαι is greatly varied.*” Buchsel, “*κείμαι,*” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 3:654. We are specifically told that the face cloth was *not* “lying” with the linen wrappings. Is the writer also telling us that the linen wrappings were “lying” differently than was the face cloth (since the face cloth had been “rolled up”)? That last verb, ἐντετυλιγμένον, is in the perfect tense and passive voice. If the writer wanted to tell us that Jesus folded the cloth post-resurrection, it seems likely he would have used the aorist tense. So what is the writer implying by the use of the perfect tense concerning the *sudarium* but the present tense for the *linen wrappings*? The writer is telling us that the face cloth is just as it was when the body had been laid to rest. Someone at that time had folded the smaller face cloth up and placed it to the side. Everything is just as it was when the tomb was closed, except now the body has somehow escaped its prison, leaving the grave clothes behind but without disturbing them or unbinding them. They are “reclining” or “lying flat.”

<sup>22</sup> The verb δέω not only means to “tie” or “bind,” sometimes it is used of actual imprisonment (Acts 12.6; cf. 21.33). Bauer, *Lexicon*, 176. It is interesting that John uses δέω for the binding of Jesus with the linen wrappings (ἔδησαν αὐτὸ ὀθονίους (John 19.40)). Mark writes of Jesus’ body as having been “enveloped” (ἐνείλησεν) by the burial Shroud (Mark 15.46).

<sup>23</sup> H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Toronto: Macmillan: 1927) 200.

<sup>24</sup> W. H. Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889) 106.

- "... denotes the continuance of completed action." <sup>25</sup>
- "... implies a past action and affirms an existing result." <sup>26</sup>

At some point in the past someone had rolled the face cloth up and put it to one side, away from the other funeral linens. Two factors are critical: (1) When did that happen? (2) Who did it? Was it Jesus after His Resurrection or someone earlier? The perfect tense informs us that the face cloth remains in that same, rolled up, state until the very present time.

In addition, John used a different word when he was describing how the face cloth had been "wrapped around" (περιεδέδτο) the face of Lazarus (11.44). Should we understand ἐντετυλιγμένον (20.7) as "folded up" or "rolled up." If the latter, is the face cloth a jaw band that is now apart from the other linens but has retained (perfect tense) its shape? Similarly, does part of the solution to this passage lie with the funeral linens (assisted by the spices) now retaining a certain form, as if the body was still present inside but isn't?<sup>27</sup>

Before we reach our conclusions about this passage, I think we should consider some potential clues from the larger context.

### 3. CLUES FROM THE LARGER CONTEXT

In that regard, there are two important differences about the burial and resurrection story of Lazarus that are likely clues for us here.<sup>28</sup> Throughout John's Gospel we find layers of meanings and double meanings.<sup>29</sup> Sometimes stories stand in contrast to each

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<sup>25</sup> Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961) 175.

<sup>26</sup> Ernest De Witt Burton, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1900) 37.

<sup>27</sup> Whitacre states: "With the body gone, the clothes were presumably collapsed, though perhaps retaining much of their shape due to the spices." R. A. Whitacre, "John," *IVP New Testament Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999) 4:473.

<sup>28</sup> I think Stibbe is correct when he argues that Lazarus's emergence from the tomb should be seen as a "prolepsis" of the empty tomb. M. W. G. Stibbe, "A Tomb with a View: John 11.1-44 in Narrative-Critical Perspective." *New Testament Studies* (1994) 40:38-54.

<sup>29</sup> For example, early on John writes, "... grace upon grace we have received. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ" (1.16-17). How does John develop or illustrate that truth for his readers? Consider the "signs" of Jesus in contrast to the "plagues" in Egypt that came through Moses. Whereas the first plague featured Moses turning the Nile River into blood, the first sign of Jesus featured a wedding where he turned water into wine (2.1-11). Likewise, the final plague brought the death of Pharaoh's first-born son; but, as a final sign in the Gospel, the Father raises His only-begotten son back to life!

other.<sup>30</sup> In that regard, the funeral linens concerning Jesus are unlike those of Lazarus in two important ways:

1. The face cloth is *not* wrapped around his head!<sup>31</sup>
2. Jesus does *not* need someone to “unbind him and let him go”!<sup>32</sup>

Then we have one significant clue that is repeated in each of the three stories immediately following our passage of interest. In each of the subsequent three stories there is a peculiar feature about Jesus that is new and striking: *out of nowhere the Lord suddenly appears!*

1. Mary is standing outside the tomb weeping. Two angels in white speak to her from inside the tomb. After she responds to them, we are told: *“She turned around and beheld Jesus standing there ...”*<sup>33</sup> Now where did He come from?
2. *“When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when **the doors were shut** where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’”*<sup>34</sup>
3. *“And after eight days again His disciples were inside and Thomas with them. Jesus came, **the doors having been shut**, and stood in their midst, and said, ‘Peace be with you.’”*<sup>35</sup>

It is time to wrap this analysis up and draw some conclusions about what John intended his readers to understand.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

First, we are to understand that the body had not been stolen! Contrary to what Mary had concluded from her quick appearance at the tomb earlier in the day,<sup>36</sup> the grave clothes are laying in such a way that theft of the body is ruled out. Besides, who would first unwrap the body and then take only the corpse, leaving the Shroud behind?

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<sup>30</sup> For example, the Jewish scholar Nicodemus comes in the darkness and remains in the dark about the words of Jesus (3.1-21). On the other hand, the subsequent chapter features an unlearned and sinful woman who comes to Jesus at noontime and becomes enlightened (4.1-42).

<sup>31</sup> John 11.44

<sup>32</sup> John 11.44

<sup>33</sup> John 20.14

<sup>34</sup> John 20.19

<sup>35</sup> John 20.26

<sup>36</sup> John 20.2. Three times in this chapter Mary expresses her belief that Jesus’ body had been taken by grave robbers (vv. 2, 13, 15).

Second, no one had unwrapped the linens to set Jesus free! His glorious, resurrected body is now able to pass through shut doors. His glorious body had done the same regarding its captivity with the Shroud! His body had dematerialized and passed right through the linen. John could see how the bands of cloth used to secure the corpse to the Shroud were still tied. It is as though the body had somehow vaporized and gone right through the cloth! Now the linens are lying there entirely undisturbed in any way.

- This is consistent with the typology in Hebrews where we are told that *Jesus' "flesh" went through the "inner curtain"* (made of linen) of the Tabernacle and "entered the Holy of Holies."<sup>37</sup>
- This is also consistent with the only explanation that begins to answer how the image on the Shroud of Turin was formed (with all its inexplicable characteristics). Based on extensive scientific research over forty years, physicist John Jackson put forward an unconventional hypothesis:

*I propose that, as **the Shroud collapsed through the underlying body**, radiation emitted from all points within that body and discolored the cloth so as to produce the observed image.*<sup>38</sup>

The face cloth had probably been used by Joseph of Arimathea when taking the body down from the cross. Covering the victim's face was an attempt to protect whatever privacy or dignity was left to secure. Once inside the tomb, before enveloping the corpse with the Shroud, the face cloth was removed, rolled up, and set aside.

- Since the face cloth was not on the corpse when the Resurrection took place, it should not have an image on it like the Shroud of Turin.
- This is in keeping with *the Sudarium of Oviedo*, a face cloth that has been in Spain since 616 AD. Scientific tests done on both *the Shroud of Turin* and *the Sudarium of Oviedo* demonstrated that "both cloths touched the same face."<sup>39</sup>

Here is a third conclusion: this author suggests the subsequent story of "Doubting Thomas" should not be divorced from our current passage.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Heb 10.20. For more on the Shroud as a type in Hebrews, see my paper, "Early Christians Identified the Shroud with Jesus' Priestly & Royal Robe!" at [www.shroud.com](http://www.shroud.com).

<sup>38</sup> John P. Jackson, "An Unconventional Hypothesis to Explain all Image Characteristics Found on the Shroud Image" in *History, Science, Theology and the Shroud* ed. by A. Berard (St. Louis: Symposium Proceedings) 1991, accessed July 10, 2019, <http://theshroudofturin.blogspot.com/2012/01/john-p-jackson-unconventional.html>. Emphasis added by current author. See also John Jackson, "Is the image on the Shroud due to a process heretofore unknown to modern science?" *Shroud Spectrum International*, No. 34 (March 1990) 3-29.

<sup>39</sup> See Spitzer, "Science and the Shroud," 16-19.

<sup>40</sup> John 20.24-31



- The very wounds prominent on the Turin Shroud are the same wounds Thomas is invited to inspect that he might believe.
- Furthermore, this apostle, Thomas, is present in the popular legend that arose in the early Church concerning a cloth with the image of Jesus' face on it and its role in the conversion of King Abgar of Edessa.<sup>41</sup>
- Thomas is the main character—and depicted as the identical twin of Jesus—in the early Christian apocryphal work, *The Hymn of the Pearl*, which centers upon the prince's fabulous robe that bears a full-body "image of the king of kings."<sup>42</sup>

This is one more occurrence in John's Gospel where stories are interconnected.<sup>43</sup>

Due to the threat of persecution during the period when the New Testament documents were written, we should not be surprised that writers would be reluctant to make clear references to the miraculous image lest it be hunted down, confiscated, and destroyed by either religious opponents or by hostile, political authorities. As Jesus himself both warned and commanded: "Do not give that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces."<sup>44</sup>

A plausible inference can be made that, due to the threat of persecution and confiscation, any reference to the Shroud in the New Testament itself would be veiled.<sup>45</sup> John's statement that the doors were shut for "fear of the Jews" may have had more than one intended meaning. The fear was not only for personal safety; it also pertained to the survival of the Shroud. Such secrecy would be in keeping with what would become known as "The Discipline of the Secret."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Thomas is said to be the one who, after the Ascension of Jesus, sent the disciple, Addai, to Abgar. See the "Teaching of Addai," dated c. AD 400. George Howard, trans., *The Teaching of Addai* (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholars Press, 1981) 11.

<sup>42</sup> This *Hymn* is analyzed in my paper, "Jesus' Priestly & Royal Robe," op. cit.

<sup>43</sup> See footnotes 29 and 30 above.

<sup>44</sup> Matthew 7.6

<sup>45</sup> In four other papers I have written about textual candidates (from the period of the early Church) that might be "veiled references" to what we know today as the Shroud of Turin. The strongest candidate is Galatians 3.1. See "The Crucified Christ Seen by the Galatians: A Literal Context for ΠΡΟΕΓΡΑΦΗ (Galatians 3.1)." My other papers are: "Early Christians Identified Jesus' Shroud with His Priestly & Royal Robe!;" "The Image on the Turin Shroud Is "the Sign of Jonah" For Our Generation!;" and "Are There Veiled References to the Shroud of Turin in the New Testament." All four papers can be found at [www.shroud.com](http://www.shroud.com).

<sup>46</sup> See Jack Markwardt, "Ancient Edessa and the Shroud: History Concealed by the Discipline of the Secret," *Proceedings of Columbus International Shroud Conference* (Columbus, Ohio, 2008) 16.

This serves as an excellent hypothesis as to why the verb “to see” is lacking an object in verse eight. We are not told exactly *what* John saw that caused him to believe (presumably that Jesus had been raised from the dead).

- Technically, John could not have seen the *image* on the Shroud because it existed only on the *inside* of the cloth!
- Even so, it is a reasonable inference that many of John’s original readers were believing disciples who knew about the existence of the Shroud and its ghost-like, miraculous image. And they might hope to one day have the privilege of seeing it, much like Thomas got a chance to see the risen Lord. Furthermore, they might believe that “seeing” the miraculous image would convey a special blessing upon them. In the Middle Ages pilgrims were promised an indulgence when they traveled to see the special relic.

John informs his readers that, while seeing the wounds of Jesus on His burial cloth might strengthen one’s faith, no special blessing will be obtained by doing so! In fact, it can be said that faith apart from seeing is blessed (20.29).



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<sup>47</sup> “The Incredulity of Saint Thomas” is an oil painting on canvas by the Italian Baroque master Caravaggio, c. 1601–1602. It is housed in a museum, in Potsdam, Germany. This picture shows an ingenious, computer retouching of that painting. The portrait of Jesus has been replaced with the image on the Shroud. St. Thomas is depicted inspecting the wounds of Jesus found on His Shroud. © 2003 Rev. Albert R. Dreisbach Jr. Collection, STERA, Inc.