

Age test of Shroud of Turin planned

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A British scientist is overseeing new tests on the Shroud of Turin that he says will show it dates to the time of Jesus of Nazareth.

Professor Christopher Ramsey of Oxford wants to check the theory that some type of contamination of the cloth caused the carbon-dating tests run in 1988 to mistakenly peg the shroud as a medieval forgery.

The 14-foot-long cloth bearing the image of a man is said to be the burial shroud of Jesus. However carbon dating 20 years ago indicated the cloth dated from A.D. 1260-1390.

Ramsey's retest is based on the theory that the level of contamination on the cloth required to skew carbon-14 dating results is far less than had been thought back in the 1980s, The Telegraph said Monday.

The project will be covered in a BBC documentary that will reportedly include new supporting archaeological evidence.

"This new theory only requires 2 percent contamination to skew the results by 1,500 years," said David Rolfe, the director of the documentary. "It springs from published data about the behavior of carbon-14 in the atmosphere which was unknown when the original tests were carried out 20 years ago."

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