

## Mary's Other Children

- I. Scripture speaks of brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.  
**MAT 12:46-47; 13:55-56; MAR 6:3; LUK 8:19-20; GAL 1:19.**
  - A. The prophecy of **PSA 69:8-9** strongly implies that Jesus had blood siblings.  
c/w **JOH 2:17; 7:3-5.**
  - B. **JOH 2:11-12** distinguishes between His brethren and His disciples.
  
- II. If Jesus had blood siblings, then Mary did not remain a virgin after His birth since He alone is the virgin-born Immanuel (**MAT 1:23**). Mary only conceived one child miraculously.
  - A. Catholicism developed a doctrine of Mary as a perpetual virgin. Therefore, texts such as those above had to be explained away.
  - B. It is not impossible for a female (or male) to be a perpetual virgin.
    1. Countless females have lived and died as unmarried virgins.
    2. It is even possible for a virgin to marry and die (or her husband die) before consummation of the marriage.
  - C. Further, it is not sinful for a virgin to choose to remain celibate.
    1. Jesus chose to do so.
    2. Jesus affirms eunuchs or celibacy. **MAT 19:12.**
    3. Paul speaks of maintaining celibacy. **1CO 7:7-9.**
  - D. The issue at stake is whether Mary remained a virgin in a state of marriage or not and if she did remain a virgin, would that decision be lawful or proper according to Scripture?
  
- III. brother: “1. The word applied to a male being to express his relationship to others (male or female) as the child of the same parent or parents. a. *properly*. The son of the same parents. But often extended to include one who has either parent in common with another (more strictly called *half-brother* or *brother of the half blood*)...”
  - A. OED goes on to show in subordinate definitions that *brother* may also mean near kin, or associational brothers, spiritual brothers, etc.
  - B. Mind that the first rule of Bible study is to define terms in their primary, ordinary sense unless context demands otherwise, or if the primary definition would create an absurdity or contradiction. This is how the Levites taught in **NEH 8:8**.
  - C. Unless context or other Scripture demands it, when we read *brother*, we should be thinking of a relationship like Cain and Abel's (the first place *brother* appears in Scripture).  
**GEN 4:2.**
  
- IV. Catholic apologists explain away the above texts by noting that terms like “brother” may refer to other than a blood sibling, perhaps cousins, nephews, brothers by association or spiritual brothers. Scripture does use such expressions.
  - A. Abraham called his nephew, Lot, his brother. **GEN 14:12-14.**
  - B. Ahab and Benhadad considered themselves “king club” brothers. **1KI 20:31-33.**
  - C. Jesus's saints are His spiritual brethren of the heavenly Father. **MAT 12:48-50; HEB 2:11.**
  - D. It is not the writers of Scripture did not know how to express near relations by any term other than brother. **LEV 10:4; 18:14; ISA 14:22; 1TI 5:4; LUK 1:36, 58.**
  - E. What the Catholic apologist does is assign subordinate meanings of *brother*, *sister*, etc., to any passage which conflicts with his doctrine. This is faulty reasoning:
    1. “Why do we know that texts like **MAT 13:55** cannot be using *brother* in a primary sense?” Ans. “Because that would deny the perpetual virginity of Mary.”
    2. The assumption is the perpetual virginity of Mary is true, which is the very point

that needs to be proven.

- F. Interpreting plain texts by non-primary definitions in this manner is the error of making the exception into the rule.
  - 1. Exceptions to a rule cannot be the rule. That is a logical absurdity.
  - 2. Exceptions to a rule do not nullify a rule, they only prove the rule.
- G. The Catholic Douay-Rheims bible footnote on **MAT 13:55** says, “These were the children of Mary wife of Cleophas, sister to our Blessed Lady, (St. Matthew 27.56; St. John 19.25,) and therefore, according to the usual style of the Scripture, they were called brethren, that is, near relations to our Savior.”
  - 1. Curiously, no such conclusion was drawn from the description of the siblings, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. **LUK 10:38-39; JOH 11:1-2.**
  - 2. The Catholic Almanac calls Martha the sister of Mary and Lazarus.
  - 3. Mind that the Douay-Rheims footnote demands that Mary’s parents named another daughter Mary also.
  - 4. **JOH 19:25** could mean there were three Mary’s plus Jesus’s aunt at the foot of the cross.
- H. Solomon used the term *sister* to figuratively describe his *wife* in **SON 4:9-12; 5:1.**
  - 1. Should we therefore conclude that all other uses of *sister* in Scripture mean *wife*?
  - 2. Did Jesus therefore have multiple wives? **MAR 6:3.**
  - 3. Did Paul mean for Timothy to treat the younger women as wives? **1TI 5:1-2.**
- V. Take the example of Abraham and Lot. We properly conclude that *brother* in **GEN 14:14** is to be understood in other than the primary sense because of **GEN 11:27; GEN 12:5; GEN 14:12** which plainly show that Abraham and Lot were not *brothers* in the primary sense of the word.
  - A. The only way that we can conclude that Abraham and Lot were *uncle* and *nephew* is by understanding the relationship between Abraham and Haran (**GEN 11:27 c/w GEN 12:5**) in the primary sense of the word *brother*.
  - B. If *brother* can mean any number of other things (uncle, kinsman, nephew, cousin, etc.) every place it appears, then the relationship between Abraham and Haran could be just about anything, making Scripture an infinite riddle.
  - C. There is an important difference between the case of *brother* in **GEN 14:14** and *brother* in texts like **MAT 12:46; 13:55-56; MAR 6:3-4; GAL 1:19**, etc.
    - 1. In the case in Genesis, Scripture (**GEN 11:27; GEN 12:5; GEN 14:12**) demands that *brother* be understood in other than the primary, normal, common sense of the word.
    - 2. There is no such compelling requirement for Jesus’s brothers other than an unfounded assumption that He could not have had any siblings.
    - 3. Therefore, we conclude that the primary definition of brother applies in texts like **MAR 6:3**, to wit, that Jesus had brothers in the same sense in which Cain and Abel were brothers.
- VI. Always beware of someone who makes an exception to a rule the rule itself. **GEN 2:16-17; 3:1.**