A common question among Christians and Bible readers is whether Mary, the mother of Jesus, remained a virgin for her entire life, or if she had other children after giving birth to Christ. While some church traditions, particularly in Catholic and Orthodox theology, uphold the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity, Scripture provides compelling evidence that Mary had other children—both sons and daughters—after Jesus was born.

Biblical Evidence from Matthew 13:53–57 (NKJV)

> Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there.
>
> When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, 'Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?'
>
> 'Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?'
>
> 'And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?'

> So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, ‘A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.
>
> Matthew 13:53–57, NKJV

This passage reveals several important truths:

Jesus had named brothers: James, Joses (Joseph), Simon, and Judas.

He also had sisters, though they are unnamed.

The phrase “His sisters, are they not all with us?” (v.56) suggests that these were known members of the local community—not distant relatives.

The Greek word used here for “brothers” is adelphoi (ἀδελφοί), which most naturally refers to biological siblings—children born of the same mother. Similarly, the Greek term for “sisters” (adelphai) is used in the same plain sense.

Other Supporting Passages

Another key text is found in Mark 6:3 (NKJV):

> Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?
>
> Mark 6:3

Again, the same list of names appears, affirming that Jesus was part of a larger earthly family.

Additionally, in John 7:5, we read:

> For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

This shows that Jesus had brothers who initially did not accept His divine mission, a detail that makes the idea of them being merely

spiritual “brothers” or cousins less likely.

Clarifying the Word “Brother”

Some traditions argue that “brothers” may refer to cousins or close relatives, especially due to the broader use of familial terms in Semitic cultures. However:

The New Testament was written in Greek, which has specific words for cousin (anepsios), as used in Colossians 4:10 when referring to Mark, the cousin of Barnabas.

The Gospel writers deliberately chose the word adelphoi for Jesus’ brothers, reinforcing the idea that these were Mary’s other biological children.

Did Joseph and Mary Have Marital Relations After Jesus?

Yes. Scripture also suggests that Joseph and Mary had a normal marital relationship after Jesus’ birth.

> In Matthew 1:24–25 (NKJV), it says:
>
> Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

The phrase “did not know her till…” strongly implies that after the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary had normal conjugal relations. The use of the word “firstborn” also implies that there were later children.

Conclusion

While certain traditions maintain that Mary remained a perpetual virgin, a plain and faithful reading of Scripture—especially in passages like Matthew 13:55–56, Mark 6:3, and John 7:5—suggests that Mary had other children after Jesus. She gave birth to both sons and daughters, making Jesus the firstborn, but not the only child.

Thus, based on the clear language of the Bible and its consistent

use of familial terms, we can conclude that Mary was the virgin mother of Jesus, but she did not remain a virgin for the rest of her life.

✦ “Your word is truth.” — John 17:17, NKJV

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