



# Understanding the Brothers:

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- Mary -- probably early teens when she married Joseph
  - perhaps 12 or 13.
  - *Infancy Gospel of James* says 15
- Joseph may have been considerably older.

# Understanding the Brothers:

## Model #1 (full brothers)

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Mary + Joseph

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Jesus – James – Joseph – Simon – Judas – 2 girls

- Natural reading of the text.
- Accords with Jesus Movement/Ebionite views.
- Not dependent upon any theology of Mary
- Rejects virgin birth stories (at least literally)
- View of liberal Protestants; most scholars

# Understanding the Brothers:

## Model #2 (half brothers)

Holy Spirit + Mary + Joseph

Jesus

James – Joseph – Simon –  
Judas – 2 girls

- Jesus' birth special (virgin birth as literal).
- Mary not a perpetual virgin
- Accepted by some Protestants

# Understanding the Brothers:

## Model #3 (Stepbrothers)

Holy Spirit + Mary + Joseph + ?

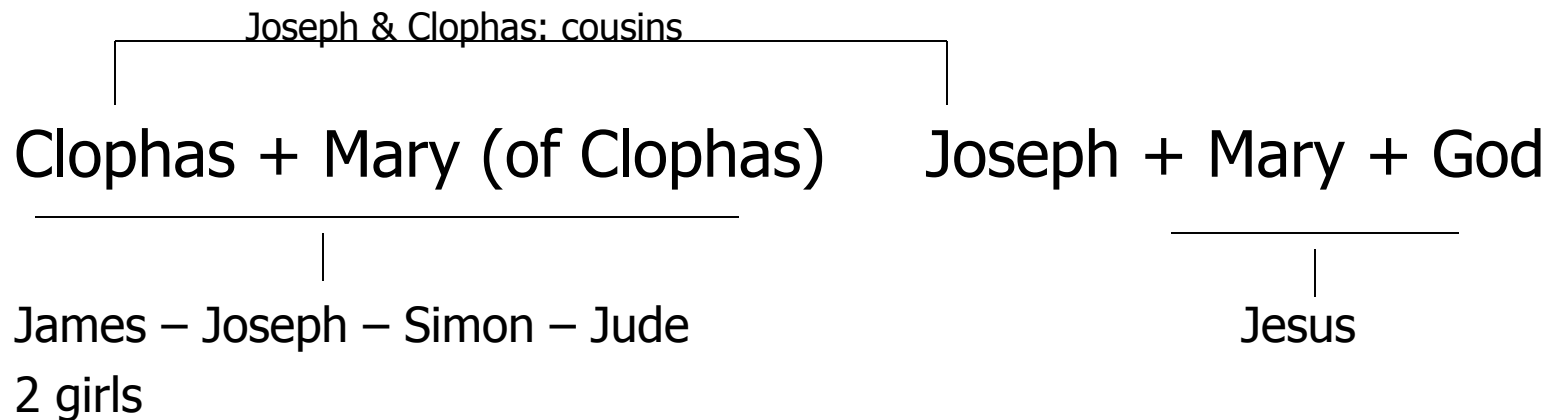
Jesus

James – Joseph – Simon –  
Judas – 2 girls

- Joseph previously married.
- So the brothers were stepbrothers
- View of Orthodox Christianity
- Leaves open whether Mary and Joseph had sexual relations and thus accommodates the perpetual virginity of Mary doctrine
- Goes back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE

# Understanding the Brothers:

## Model #4 (first cousins)



- 'Brother' = 'cousin' or 'kin'
- Is the view of the Roman Catholic Church
- Protects the Perpetual Virginity of Mary doctrine
- Goes back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE



## Note

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- The perpetual virginity of Mary doctrine (never had sex with anyone) drives models #3 (stepbrothers) and #4 (first cousins).

# Understanding the Brothers:

## Model #5 (different fathers)

?\* + Mary + Joseph

Jesus

James – Joseph – Simon –  
Judas – 2 girls

- Possible rape victim by a Roman soldier; possible affair
- Suggested by Celsus (2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)

# Understanding the Brothers: Model #6: Don't Know



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Mary + the man (or men) in  
her life (whoever they were)

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Jesus – James – Joseph – Simon – Judas – 2  
girls





# Understanding the Virgin Birth

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Divine being+ human female

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Divine-human

- ✓ Jesus
- ✓ Head of religions such as Dionysius, Mithras
- ✓ Roman emperors

Interpreting Virgin Birth Language

- as literal, biology
- as metaphorical