

# The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

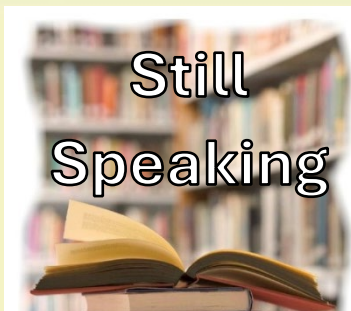
## A Controversial Newsletter "The Printed Voice of Summit Theological Seminary"

~ All articles written by Terry Carter unless otherwise stated ~

Vol. 38 No. 3

July 2025

Terry Carter, Editor



### Were Mary and Elisabeth Cousins?

By George L. Faull

Dear Brother Faull,

How were Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, related? The Bible says they were cousins, but Elisabeth was a Levite and Mary was of Judah!

Here was my reply:

This is a good question that also occurred to me many years ago. The word "cousins" is used twelve times in the Bible and is translated many ways. In the KJV, it is translated kinsman (7), cousin (2), kinfolk (2), and kin (1).

Vine says it comes from two Greek words and means "born with".

Strong says it simply means, "of the same kin", "a relative (by blood)",

and in a wider sense "of the same race" or "a fellow countryman".

The translated word "cousins" appears in the following Scriptures: **Mark 6:4, Luke 1:36, 56; 2:44; 14:12; 21:16, John 18:26, Acts 10:24, Romans 9:3; 16:7, 11, 21.**

From this we cannot deduce any more than that they were relatives of the same kin. There was, however, an obvious close relationship since Mary went and stayed with Elisabeth until the birth of John the Baptist.

Those who want to use this passage to deny that Mary is of the tribe of Judah and claim she is a Levite, thus disproving Jesus as the Christ, ignore plain Scripture that state Mary's Davidic origin. (**Luke 1:27, 32, 69; Romans 1:3; II Timothy 2:8; Hebrews 7:14**)

Elisabeth's father was of the tribe of Aaron (**Luke 1:5**) for she was of the daughters of Aaron. However, her mother could have been of Judah and Mary's mother's sister. This would have made her Mary's aunt. It was not unusual for women to intermarry with another tribe. Even Aaron married a woman of Judah as seen by comparing:

**Exodus 6:23**, "And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of **Naashon**, to wife; and she

bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar."

And

**I Chronicles 2:10**, "And Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat **Nahshon**, prince of the children of Judah;"

If a woman did marry out of her tribe, she forfeited her father's land. Remember the daughters of Zelophehad. (**Numbers 27:1-11 and 36:1-4**)

However, the Levites inherited no land, so the Levite girls would not hesitate to marry into another tribe. (See **Deuteronomy 18:1-2**)

Elisabeth's name is interesting. Her Greek name is the Greek form of Aaron's wife's name, "**Elishaba**". It means "**an oath of the Lord**" or "**God's oath**". Zacharias, her husband's name means, "**remembered by the LORD**".

There was "**an oath of God**" (Elisabeth) that a forerunner to the Messiah would come. It is impossible for God to lie. "God **remembered**" (**Zacharias**) and gave them a son. Zacharias said, "his name is John" (not "it will be" or "we will call him" John) but "His name is John". **John means, "grace of God". God remembered**

**(Zacharias) God's oath (Elisabeth) and thus was the boy who would declare "the grace of God" (John).**

**John 1:17**, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ". The law and prophets prophesied until John (grace).  
**Matthew 11:3**

This boy would declare the grace of God for he said of Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world". **John 1:29**

In light of this, read Zacharias' word in **Luke 1:67-79**, "67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68 Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to **remember his holy covenant**; 73 **The oath which he sware to our father Abraham**, 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 **To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins**, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Look closely at **verses 72 and 73**. God **remembered** His Holy covenant and the "**oath which he swore**" to "give remission of sins" and "tender mercy of our God".

Elisabeth (God's oath), Zacharias (is remembered) and John (grace of God).

What a message! Do you see what an interesting book the Bible is? You have a question. You seek its answer. Your doubt becomes faith and the answer always leads to the remission of sins and the grace of God!

Note: The above article was originally published in *The Gospel Unashamed* in January 2004. We would like to remind our readers that Brother Faull wrote many wonderful articles through the years of which this is one example. From time to time, we will republish other of George's articles as many are still relevant today.