

July 21

*Behold the Bridegroom!*

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You shall be called Hephzibah...for Yahweh delights in you...as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you. – Isaiah 62:4-5

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[John 2:22-36, Jordan Valley] After these things, Jesus came with his disciples into the land of Judea. He stayed there with them, and baptized. John also was baptizing in Enon near Salim, because there was much water there. They came, and were baptized. For John was not yet thrown into prison. There arose therefore a questioning on the part of John's disciples with some Jews about purification. They came to John, and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, the same baptizes, and everyone is coming to him."

John answered, "A man can receive nothing, unless it has been given him from heaven. You yourselves testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the

bridegroom's voice. This, my joy, therefore is made full. He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all. He who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. What he has seen and heard, of that he testifies; and no one receives his witness. He who has received his witness has set his seal to this, that God is true. For he whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for God gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand. One who believes in the Son has eternal life, but one who disobeys the Son won't see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

[Luke 3:16,18-20] John preached good news to the people, but Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things which Herod had done, added this also to them all, that he shut up John in prison.

1. The Jews from Jerusalem were constantly arguing with John and Jesus' disciples. Why?
2. Do you believe that what you do is because you've received it from heaven? How so?
3. Jesus, my joy is full when you get the glory; help me today to obey you and give you...