22—31. ST. JOHN. 489   
   
 26 And they came unto John, and said unto him,   
 Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, \*to whom 2 .1.7,15,   
 thou ™JZarest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all ~   
 men come to him. 27 John answered and said, \*A man \*}¢ortv.7   
   
   
 can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. James 1.17,   
 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, >I am not bo.1.20,27.   
 the Christ, but °that Iam sent before him. \*? 4 He that ¢¥lji2-   
   
 hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the axistezit   
 bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth § 5   
 x greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy esr,   
 therefore is fulfilled. 80 He must increase, but I must 3a te   
   
 decrease. 31¢He that cometh from above ‘is above all: chal   
 U sender, hast borne. 4.15,   
 % render, with joy. Kom. ix.   
 28.] “Not only so, but I have always   
 to these conjectures, because the text gives given the same consistent testimony; that   
 us no further insight into the fact, than I was only the forerunner of One greater   
 what the circumstances and the answer of than myself.’ The word him in the   
 John render probable. 26.] Com- original does not refer to “the Christ :”   
 pare ch, i. 28. all men come to but ¢o Jesus, as the subject of ver. 26;   
 him] Not, probably, any who had been and thus is not merely a general testimony   
 baptized already hy John; but multitudes with regard to the Messiah, but a personal   
 of persons. The baptism now carried on one to Jesus. In reading this verse there-   
 by the disciples appears to have stood very fore, strong emphasis should be laid on the   
 much in the same position as that of John. word him. 29.) Here first, (and   
 It was preparatory to the public ministry here only in our Gospel,) comes, from the   
 of our Lord properly so called, which mouth of the Forerunner, this great sym-   
 began in Galilee after the imprisonment of bolical reference, which is common in the   
 John. It was not accompanied with the other Gospels and in the Epistles. It is   
 gift of the Spirit, see ch. vii. 39. As remarkable that our Lord brings it for-   
 John’s commission was now on the wane, ward in His answer to the disciples of   
 so our Lord’s was expanding. The solemn Jokn respecting fasting, Matt. ix. 15:   
 cleansing of the temple was its opening ; where see note on the further import of   
 and now it is proceeding onwards, gather- the terms used. The friend of the   
 ing multitudes around it (see ch. iv. 1). bridegroom was the regular organ of com-   
 27.] The subject of this answer munication in the preliminaries of mar-   
 is, —the divinely-appointed humiliation riage, and had the ordering of the marriage   
 and eclipsing of the Baptist himself before feast. It is to this last time, and not to   
 the greater majesty of Him who was come any ceremonial custom connected with the   
 after him. Accordingly he begins in this marriage rites, that this refers. The   
 verse by answering to the zeal of his dis- friend rejoices at hearing the voice of the   
 ciples, ‘that he cannot go beyond the bridegroom, (see Jer. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv.   
 bounds of his heaven-appointed mission.’ 10: Rey. xviii. 28,) in his triumph and   
 “TI cannot arrogate to myself and take joy, at the marriage. He rejoiceth with   
 upon me what God has not given.” Wet- joy because he hears in the voice of the   
 stein. Some apply the words to Jesus :— Bridegroom an assurance of the happy   
 “Tf His circumstauces are more illustrious, completion of his mission, and on account   
 and all men come to Him, it is no matter of the voice itself,—“so sweet, so lovely,   
 of wonder; for such would be the case so telling of salvation.” The words   
 with Divinity.” Chrysostom. But the standeth and belong merely to the graphic   
 whole tone of the answer makes the other setting forth of the similitude. this   
 view more likely. Of course the remark, my joy therefore is fulfilled] ‘Because I   
 being general, mayin the background have have presented the bride to Him, and ful-   
 reference to the greater mission of Jesus; filled, as is elsewhere said, the ministry   
 but not primarily. The parallelism of entrusted to me.” Euthymius.   
 “a man” here, and himself, as the subject 30.] decrease, ‘as the morning-star at   
 of “Isaid” in the next verse, also sup- the rise of the sun.” Euthymius. See note   
 ports this view; see Heb. v. 4.