

one which signifies, to proclaim the gospel, but one which means to proclaim as a herald, to announce any thing openly and publicly. Accordingly by personally going, and perhaps by simply appearing, in that spiritual and glorified body, he made known openly a great truth, respecting which they would not suffer themselves to be persuaded in the days of Noah; namely, the truth concerning the resurrection of the dead. For this purpose, Jesus, who was the first fruits from the dead, appeared to them, as being in all probability the first who denied the resurrection—the fathers of this unbelief.

It was by a similar, and perhaps somewhat previous “appearing” that Jesus brought life and immortality to light on earth; 2 Ti. i. 10. By “appearing” in his glorified body, “he brought to light,” in the literal sense of the words; that is, he exhibited to the eyes of men, a specimen of a body possessed of “life and immortality.”

This appearing exhibited to the sight of men, what the ancient gospel had long presented to their faith, the “life and immortality by,” i. e. promised by “the gospel,” as far as it refers to “the redemption of the body.”

And this appearing in a risen and glorified body, “gave assurance unto all,” of the day of judgment, the day of final reward to the righteous, and of final punishment to the wicked. Acts, xvii. 31. When Jesus commenced his ministry, he found the place in Scripture where it was written, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel,” &c.; Luke iv. 17—19. He then omitted to quote the clause in which Isaiah mentioned “the day of vengeance of our God.” Of this, however, he subsequently spoke, especially towards the close of his ministry. And by his last “appearing,” whether to a few chosen witnesses on earth, or a few spirits in prison, he gave assurance of its coming.

And so the gospel dispensation itself, will be closed by the angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying, “Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come.” The closing scene being only part of the everlasting Gospel, which an angel was commissioned to proclaim.

Those spirits referred to were, when Noah was on earth, not only an unpersuadable, but a violent race. The earth was filled with “violence” at that time. And, from allusion to them in connection with the subject on which the Apostle was treating, it seems that this violence was, at least in part, directed against the righteous. This becomes evident from the fact, that it was from such violent