

Precautions taken by the leaders of the people

While they were on their way, some of the guard went off into the city to tell the chief priests all that had happened. These held a meeting with the elders and, after some discussion, handed a considerable sum of money to the soldiers with these instructions, 'This is what you must say, "His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep". And should the governor come to hear of this, we undertake to put things right with him ourselves and to see that you do not get into trouble.' The soldiers took the money and carried out their instructions, and to this day that is the story among the Jews.

Appearance in Galilee. The mission to the world

Meanwhile the eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated.^f Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,^g and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

8:10+
Lk 24:9-10
Jn 3:35+

Mk 16:15-16
Lk 24:47
Ac 1:8+;
2:38+
18:20
Ps 125:2
Jn 14:18-21

appearance that is coupled with an apostolic mission (Mt 28:16-20; Lk 24:36-49; Jn 20:19-23; cf. Mk 16:14-18). As well as this distinction there are two traditions as to where the appearances took place: 1. all in Galilee (Mk 16:7; Mt 28:10,16-20); 2. all in Judaea (Lk and Jn 20). By way of appendix, Jn 21 adds an appearance in Galilee which though it bears the character of an appearance to individuals (it is for Peter and John predominantly) is nevertheless coupled with an apostolic mission (given to Peter). The primitive apostolic preaching that Paul reproduces in 1 Co 15:3-7 lists 5 appearances (apart from the appearance to Paul himself) which are not easily harmonised with the gospel accounts; in particular he mentions an appearance to James of which the *Gospel to the Hebrews* also speaks. All this gives the impression that different groups, which cannot now be easily identified, have given rise

to different strands of tradition. But these very divergencies of tradition are far better witnesses than any artificial or contrived uniformity to the antiquity of the evidence and the historical quality of all these manifestations of the risen Christ.

^f 28 f. An alternative translation, with less grammatical support: 'those who had hesitated'. On the doubts Mt mentions here cf. Mk 16:11,14; Lk 24:11,41; Jn 20:24-29.

^g It may be that this formula, so far as the fullness of its expression is concerned, is a reflection of the liturgical usage established later in the primitive community. It will be remembered that Ac speaks of baptising 'in the name of Jesus', cf. Ac 1:5+. But whatever the variation in formula, the underlying reality remains the same.