

has been made by God to care adequately for the ever-increasing Kingdom interests in the earth. True to his word, in response to the loving service of his devoted witnesses, he has opened the windows of heaven and now pours out a blessing so rich that there is no lack among his people.—Mal. 3:10.

⁵ In the first century when the Lord Jehovah poured out his spirit upon those faithful worshipers assembled in Jerusalem at Pentecost, the evidence that these indeed were the servants of the Living God and that the message they taught was the truth was so overwhelming that the organization experienced a growth of about three thousand persons in one day. (Acts 2:1-42) Thereafter goodly numbers continued to learn the truth. How could such growth be handled, how could they be adequately instructed and organized by the small Christian congregation that was then in its infancy? The answer was supplied by God through Christ Jesus, in the form of qualified apostles and others to serve as overseers.—1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:7-14.

JEHOVAH'S CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION

⁶ Jehovah has established a very definite channel of communication through which he deals with his people. In the time before the flood he used Noah, and it was vital for all to recognize that fact in order to be saved from the world cataclysm of that time. (Heb. 11:7) At the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt it was Moses through whom God dealt with his people. When they recognized the theocratic arrangement Jehovah's blessing rested upon them. However, when they took a merely human view of this provision of God they brought

trouble upon themselves. Such was the experience of Miriam, who was smitten with leprosy for her failure to recognize Jehovah's arrangement with respect. Others, such as Korah, Dathan, Abiram and the men with them, were cut off in death for their self-willed independence. And even those who sympathized with them brought upon themselves divine disapproval, 14,700 of them being cut off on one occasion.—Num. 12:1-10; 16:1-35, 41-50.

⁷ Let us now unmistakably identify Jehovah's channel of communication for our day, that we may continue in his favor. Listen to the inspired answer to the situation, in Matthew 24:45-47 (NW): "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings." And has he? Yes, particularly since 1919 has it been true that he has appointed the collective body of the anointed remnant over all the visible interests of the Kingdom. The "slave" then became responsible not only for ministering to the needs of the anointed body members but also for taking on the responsibility of preaching the good news of the established Kingdom to people of all nations. (Matt. 24:14) Such is true not by their determination of it, but because God himself has so directed. "God has set the members in the body, each one of them, just as he pleased," is the way it is pictured in 1 Corinthians 12:18 (NW). It is vital that we appreciate this fact and respond to the directions of the "slave" as we would to the voice of God, because it is His provision.

5. How was the growth of the newly formed Christian congregation handled in the first century?
6. Illustrate why recognition of Jehovah's channel of communication was so important in times past.

7. (a) What is Jehovah's channel of communication today, and by whose determination? (b) What has been entrusted to its care?