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JAN

Local Church Offering



Retired sea captain and early Adventist pioneer, Joseph Bates knew how to put first things first. He had been a wealthy man, but by 1846 he had used up his entire fortune spreading the news of Jesus' return. One morning his wife, Prudence, asked him to buy some flour so that she could finish her baking. Joseph Bates went out and spent his last bit of money on the flour. When Prudence found out she burst into tears sobbing, "What are we going to do?" "I'm going to write a book and spread the Sabbath truth," Bates replied. And then, responding to her startled expression, he reassured her, "The Lord will provide."

And provide He did. That same day a letter containing a \$10 bill arrived from someone who felt impressed that Bates needed money. With this Joseph Bates was able to buy a barrel of flour, potatoes, and other needed items, and still have money left over to begin work on his book (Nix & Kline, *The Spirit of Sacrifice & Commitment*, pp. 65-68).

Appeal

At the beginning of this New Year, let's put first things first. Let's put God first in every aspect of our lives—including our finances.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, at the beginning of this New Year please help us to put first things first. We know that as we entrust all we have—and all that we are to You— You will provide.