

KNOW WHAT:

- Today we are continuing our series on the names of God in the Old Testament. This week we are looking at God being called 'Provider'.
- The Old Testament is the first part of the Bible which tells stories about God and his people before Jesus was born.
- Each time God is called a different name, it shows us something new about who God is.
- In today's story, God miraculously provides an unlimited amount of flour and oil for baking bread to family in need of help.
- Elijah, a man sent by God to give messages to people, was hungry in the wilderness. God directed him to ask a widow for some bread. She and her son were hungry too, but she gave their last meal to Elijah.
- God had provided a meal for Elijah, then he miraculously provided for the widow and her son.
- The story can be found in the First book of Kings, chapter 17.

SO WHAT:

- All good things come from God, He is the provider of everything we enjoy in our lives.
- We can ask God when we are in need, He hears our prayers and can work miracles.

NOW WHAT:

- Let us remember to say 'thank you' to God for all that we enjoy.
- Let us ask for God to provide for those of us in any kind of need.

BEN'S BLOG:

Throughout Autumn, I am privileged to be leading an Alpha Course every Monday evening. Alpha is a ten week course to ask questions and learn more about the Christian Faith. There are about 12 of us from this church who meet each week. Last week we looked at prayer and how coincidences happen sometimes, but when we pray 'coincidences' seem to happen far more frequently. One such time was when I was studying at a Bible college in Derbyshire. I vividly remember Nigel, the bursar, who sent a letter to each student a few weeks into the term giving you a figure that you owed to the college for your course and lodgings. Nigel's letter was pushed under my door on Monday, demanding I pay the fees by the following Monday. I was short, really short, a few thousand pounds short.

I prayed, trusting in God my provider, and 'coincidences' seemed to start happening. My father called, saying someone had given him an envelope with my name on it... it was full of cash. Some money was pushed under my door. The tax man sent me a generous letter. A friend wrote and sent a cheque... and so on, until my target was within easy reach. On the day the fees were due, I was just £15 short.

The following day, I shared my story of God's provision at church. Not wanting to 'embarrass' God, I decided not to mention the £15 shortfall, but praised him for the miraculous provision. After the service, a man said to me "when you were sharing your story, I felt God prompt me to give this to you". He handed over £15.

I believe God's provision can be miraculous, ordinary, or somewhere in the middle. What we must understand is that all things come from God, and he longs to bless us and provide for our needs.