

**Job 1:1; 2:1-10**

**When you don't understand**

The story of Job begins. He is an honest and upright man, who loses everything (home, family, prosperity, health) yet refuses to blame God, believing that both good and bad comes from God's hand. A dialogue between God and Satan (called 'The Adversary' or 'The Accuser' in some translations) seems to indicate that God has allowed Job to be tested in this way.



**Bible notes**



Job is part of the philosophy or wisdom subsection of the Writings of the Hebrew Scriptures, along with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. In 1:1, Job is presented as the epitome of the wise person celebrated in Proverbs. The existential question of Job is why do good people suffer? The biblical commentator CS Rodd<sup>1</sup> suggests that Job is one of the very greatest works of world literature, but it is also the most difficult text in the Old Testament, particularly as it comes from a culture far removed from our own. Job is a poetic piece that reads like a play, in which truth is presented differently. It is a book to be grappled with. Jesus himself often left those he spoke to with questions to ponder. Philip Yancey points out that, 'Job decisively refutes one theory – that suffering always comes as a result of sin'<sup>2</sup>. In chapter one, we have the particular challenge of illness. The exact nature of the illness is not known but part of its consequence is social isolation – think leprosy in biblical times and, more recently, AIDS and Covid. Job was further ostracised because of the view that his illness was the result of sin. However, Job persists in his view that everything – good and bad – comes from God. The narrator's position here is a bit complicated. Job's suffering is inflicted by Satan but clearly permitted by Yahweh.

<sup>1</sup>CS Rodd, The Book of Job (Epworth).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Yancey, The Bible Jesus Read (Zondervan) p.69.

**First impressions**

- What helps you make sense of things?
- What are you confused by in life? What questions do you wrestle with?
- Have you experienced God's peace/presence during a dark time in your life?



**Pray**



Get cosy, lying down, maybe with a soft blanket. Slowly breathe in and out. As you do think about the things that are tricky or difficult at the moment, tell God about these. Write a word of hope onto a pebble with a permanent marker. Carry this with you wherever you go as a reminder that even in the most difficult times there is hope.

**Read**



Read *The Huge Bag of Worries* by Virginia Ironside, Hodder Children's Books, and think about how we manage when things are difficult.

**Write**

In a journal, note down the questions you have for/about God. Share these with an adult you trust, a friend or with God.

**A sending out prayer**

Do we know everything? No!  
Does God know everything? Yes!  
Do we understand God? No!  
Does God understand us? Yes!  
Do we have faith in God? Yes!  
Does God have faith in us? Yes!  
Then let us not disappoint him:  
Lord, help us to live as people of faith holding on tight to you. Amen.

**WATCH**



Watch this video about the Book of Job and aim to share one thing you have learned with a member of your church group.