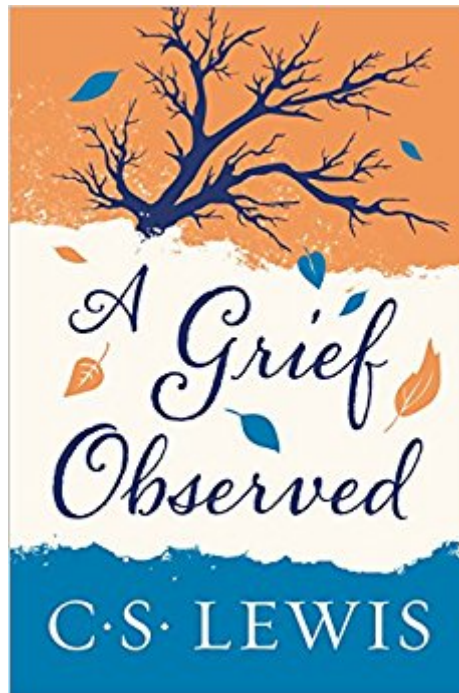




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# A Grief Observed



## Synopsis

Written after his wife's tragic death as a way of surviving the "mad midnight moment," *A Grief Observed* is C.S. Lewis's honest reflection on the fundamental issues of life, death, and faith in the midst of loss. This work contains his concise, genuine reflections on that period: "Nothing will shake a man -- or at any rate a man like me -- out of his merely verbal thinking and his merely notional beliefs. He has to be knocked silly before he comes to his senses. Only torture will bring out the truth. Only under torture does he discover it himself." This is a beautiful and unflinchingly honest record of how even a stalwart believer can lose all sense of meaning in the universe, and how he can gradually regain his bearings.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

C.S. Lewis joined the human race when his wife, Joy Gresham, died of cancer. Lewis, the Oxford don whose Christian apologetics make it seem like he's got an answer for everything, experienced crushing doubt for the first time after his wife's tragic death. *A Grief Observed* contains his epigrammatic reflections on that period: "Your bid--for God or no God, for a good God or the Cosmic Sadist, for eternal life or nonentity--will not be serious if nothing much is staked on it. And you will never discover how serious it was until the stakes are raised horribly high," Lewis writes. "Nothing will shake a man--or at any rate a man like me--out of his merely verbal thinking and his merely notional beliefs. He has to be knocked silly before he comes to his senses. Only torture will bring out the truth. Only under torture does he discover it himself." This is the book that inspired the film

Shadowlands, but it is more wrenching, more revelatory, and more real than the movie. It is a beautiful and unflinchingly honest record of how even a stalwart believer can lose all sense of meaning in the universe, and how he can gradually regain his bearings. --Michael Joseph Gross  
--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"I read Lewis for comfort and pleasure many years ago, and a glance into the books revives my old admiration."-- John Updike  
"A very personal, anguished, luminous little book about the meaning of death, marriage, and religion."-- "Publishers Weekly

I found this book 20 years ago when my beautiful daughter was stillborn. Of all of the things offered to me at the time, this was the only thing I read that provided any comfort. I am reading again now when a close friend has taken his own life and left a young, beautiful family behind. Neither event makes any sense to me. Both challenge my faith. You will not find any neat answers, cosmic solutions or expressions of God that will "help you get through it." You will read the journal of a man devastated by his loss. He writes of his grief as he observes it. He articulates the great internal battle that I suffered. If you are grieving an enormous loss, you may find comfort here. I can't explain why, as C.S. Lewis did not include words of comfort. I have found absolutely no comfort in anything else I have read - with titles like *Roses in December* and so on. They tend to be written after the author had worked through the grief and can speak of it with the clarity of hindsight that the experience taught them. Well, when you are in the depths of sorrow, nothing makes any sense. Everything you believed has been knocked over. And that is exactly what C.S. Lewis describes in his own grief. It is profound. If you have not suffered a devastating loss, this book might not communicate well to you. But if you have, you will find a great mind and wonderful writer who understands your grief well enough to put words to it.

THIS WAS A DIFFICULT READ, BECAUSE I HAD A GOOD FRIEND WHO LOST HIS WIFE OF 37 YEARS TO OVARIAN CANCER, AND I WITNESSED HIS GOING-THROUGH SOME OF THE SAME THINGS AS C.S.LEWIS. I APPLAUD HIS ABILITY TO DESCRIBE THE EFFECTS OF HIS GRIEF, ESPECIALLY, BECAUSE, I CAN TELL HE IS A VERY PRIVATE PERSON... AND GRIEF IS A SUCH AN INTENSELY PRIVATE EMOTION... SO TO HAVE SHARED HIS GRIEF JOURNEY WAS TRULY A GENEROUS GIFT. MY REASON FOR GIVING IT 4 STARS INSTEAD OF 5 IS THAT; I FELT DISAPPOINTED W/ THE END, AS IF NOT ENOUGH TIME HAD LAPSED W/ THE GRIEF TO BE DESCRIBED MORE FROM A DISTANCE... AT THE SAME TIME, I CAN

UNDERSTAND THAT HE MAY HAVE JUST NEEDED TO FEEL FINISHED W/ THE BOOK, AND PUT IT AWAY. I GAVE THE BOOK TO MY FRIEND, AND HE SAID IT HELPED IN THE WAY HE COULD IDENTIFY W/ SOME OF THE SAME FEELINGS... SO, IT ALLOWED HIM TO FEEL MORE JUSTIFIED W/ HIS FEELINGS... AND, NOT SO MUCH AS IF HE WAS LOOSING HIS MIND. A GOOD BOOK FOR ANY MAN WHO HAS LOST HIS WIFE.

I saw some negative reviews on this and almost didn't buy it, but trusted in the name CS Lewis. They did not like the way CS Lewis spoke with candor about the pain he was dealt, and still trying to relate to God in his faith. The book did not let me down. Healing and celebration comes only after walking through the abyss, and if one can't get through the abyss with this author, then they will have hard time with others, like Jeremiah in the Bible (Lamentations), and David (Psalms), and perhaps Christ as he was facing his crucifixion. If you are reader facing the valley of the shadow of death, you can trust the name CS Lewis.

I started reading this after a friend died, and I found it to be exactly what I needed. CS Lewis walks through his own grief and struggles with God along the way. There are no answers in this book - but there is a conversation between Lewis and God, Lewis and the reader, and God and the reader. Everyone grieves differently, but this book walks through the grief with you and I came out the other side stronger for it.

I recently lost my Dad, who was the definition of a wonderful father--and also my best friend and greatest mentor. Lewis writes in such a real way, and I could really identify with the rawness of what he was going through. He doesn't preach, he just lets us inside of his heart and mind as he tries to make sense of the unreconcilable. It's not a warm and fuzzy book, and it's not about giving easy answers. Instead it's about being human and experiencing loss, questioning everything, but in the end standing on the bare truth of God's promises and the hope we have to be reunited with our loved ones in Christ one day.

A touching memoir of a widower's grief. It is very different from CS Lewis' past writings ... a genre change, a style change, and a 'message' change.

This book put words eloquently to my pain. My husband's life was tragically taken. My love for my "G" runs so deep! He was my everything! Therefore my pain is equally as deep and hangs on me

continually. I found comfort in the book. I rarely find comfort or relief from the pain and anguish of losing my soulmate and best friend in anything. It's a book I will keep and return to often.

I read this in one go in the bath one evening. Lewis writes beautifully, honestly with such raw emotion about his grief for his late wife. For anyone who's grieving the loss of a loved one, or who wants to explore grief from inside out, this book is for you.

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