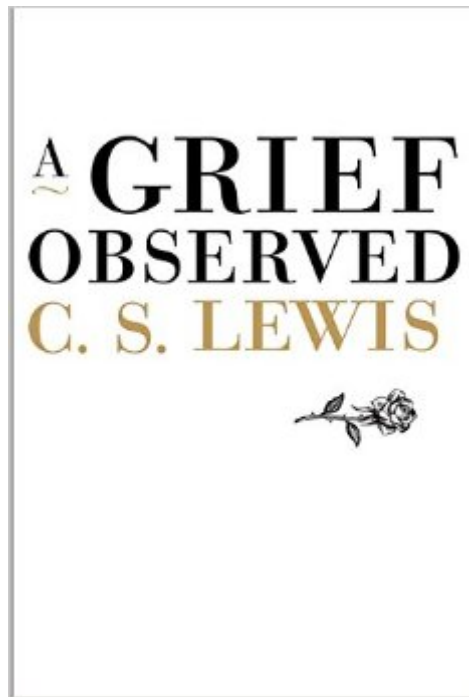


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A Grief Observed



Synopsis

A classic work on grief, *A Grief Observed* is C.S. Lewis's honest reflection on the fundamental issues of life, death, and faith in the midst of loss. Written after his wife's tragic death as a way of surviving the "mad midnight moments," *A Grief Observed* is an unflinchingly truthful account of how loss can lead even a stalwart believer to lose all sense of meaning in the universe, and the inspirational tale of how he can possibly regain his bearings.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Lewis' book (journal, really) captures the feeling of those in grief, there is no doubt about that. June 16, 2000 my wife left this life, 8 weeks to the day after our first child was born. In the midst of our struggle, there were several books that my family and I found comfort in, and this book was one of them. I rated this book 4 stars because it's difficult. It's not difficult to read, it doesn't contain long arguments or technical language. The content is hard for those in the throws of grief. And yet it is somehow comforting to know that you're not alone, the feelings that you feel aren't the signs of insanity. I remember several times thinking I was going insane, that I'd finally lost it...only to read those exact thoughts from Lewis' journal. Lewis' experience with grief was different from mine, too. I suppose everyone's is different in some way. Lewis is angry with God, and he struggles with his faith. He explains that it wasn't that he was in danger of losing his belief in God, but that he "was in danger of coming to believe such terrible things about him." You may identify with Lewis' words, and I truly believe you'll find comfort in this book. If I may, I would like to recommend another book for those who suffer and those in ministry to the suffering, as well. Nicholas Wolterstorff's *LAMENT*

FOR A SON captures the intimate details of grief, and in many ways I identified more with Wolterstorff than I did with Lewis. For those who've lost, this book is a difficult and yet rewarding right of passage. You travel down the narrow path, on hallowed ground. You make a journey that those who haven't made cannot speak of, and you can find comfort in the experience of those who travel with you.

For a Cambridge professor, C.S. Lewis writes in simple, clear English free of flourish or pretension, and "A Grief Observed" is all the more powerful because of its style. It's a straight-forward account of his struggle with faith in the face of tragedy, and one of the best "self-help" guides available for those dealing with the questions that arise when dealing with the ultimate grief. "A Grief Observed" is about Lewis' crisis of faith following the death of his wife, poet Joy Davidman, whom he wed in the final decade of his life, well aware she was dying of cancer. Their romance and the tragedy that befell them was later dramatized in the play "Shadowlands," and the subsequent film starring Anthony Hopkins and Debra Winger. It's easy to see why Lewis, a famous Christian apologist who also wrote "The Chronicles of Narnia" and "The Screwtape Letters," first published "A Grief Observed" under the pseudonym of N.W. Clark. The brutally honest reactions to tragedy and its effect on his definition of God would have shocked his faithful readers and might have tarnished his reputation. We are taught to love God and accept that He loves us. To question that thesis, or to express anger at God or to doubt his character, might be construed as blasphemy. Lewis writes that grief feels much like fear at times. "Meanwhile, where is God?" he asks. God is present, or seems to be, when all is well. "But go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence. You may as well turn away." Lewis does not doubt God's existence, but wonders if the Supreme Being is not what He has claimed to be.

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