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5-2016

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Shannon, "Dose of Reality" (2016). *Stories - Students*. 5.
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Dose of Reality

BY SHANNON KELLY

In the fall of 2013, I thought my life was over. After being seizure-free for nine years, the medication that had controlled my epilepsy so well began to fail. My seizure activity returned just as I was about to leave home for my first year of college. Things got worse and worse every day, and because I had reached the maximum dose of my medicine, I could not increase it. My doctors decided to try adding new medications onto my current one in hopes of regaining control of my seizures as they began to interfere with my ability to function. Unfortunately, my seizures remained out of control and I suffered brutal side effects from the new medications. I was constantly nauseous; I pushed through severe vertigo and splitting headaches every day. The drugs ravaged my body until I was drained of all energy and motivation. After a third medication failed and I developed severe anxiety, I was so sick that I had to withdraw from school and went home to recover.

While we searched frantically for a treatment to get my seizures back under control, I had nothing but time to process what was happening to me . . . and wonder why. In an attempt to understand and keep courage, I turned to my Bible for comfort. Despite bouts of bitterness and questioning, I drew great strength from the story of Job. He was someone to whom I could relate. Even a person with the greatest faith in God sometimes questions his will and feels abandoned.

My cries and misery echoed Job's: *How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me... I cry out to you, God, but you do not answer; I stand up, but you merely look at me. You turn on me ruthlessly; with the might of your hand you attack me. You snatch me up and drive me before the wind; you toss me about in the storm* (Job 29:2; 30:20–22 NIV). Then, I read two simple passages that changed my entire outlook: *You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and*



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not trouble? . . . But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold (Job 2:10; 23:10 NIV).

Through my ordeal, I learned to cling to God, for there was nothing else I could do. I found myself filled with a sense of peace and assurance that I would eventually be delivered as Job was, whether on this earth, or at the glorious second coming. Finally, I received deliverance in the form of a medical diet: the Ketogenic Diet for epilepsy. It took the greater part of a year before my seizures got under control but, as of recently, I have been seizure-free for a full year. I am back at college, and am succeeding. I refused to let Satan conquer me, and God honored my faith as he did Job's. Great is his faithfulness!

Shannon Kelly, a native of Virginia, is majoring in journalism and minoring in Biblical Languages at Andrews University. She lives and breathes horses.