Pete knew that he was going to be okay eventually. God had transformed him when he had saved him, but that didn't keep him from hurting. He had spent a lot of time reading his bible and journaling these past few weeks. Even though he knew why Jenni had rejected him, he had come to understand that she was being unfair. Pete was also beginning to see God in a different light.

He had understood the Father, Son and Spirit parts of God for a number of years, at least to some extent, but the God of the Old Testament had seemed rather foreign to him. Now Pete was beginning to make sense of that part of God too. Over and over God had poured out his love to his beloved, to ancient Israel, and yet she was not satisfied with God as he was, she wanted something different. Israel rejected God again and again. Unlike Jenni and Pete, God had never done anything wrong that Israel could use to justify her rejection. God continued to love her, even while he let her go her own way and suffer the consequences of her rejection of him. But God didn't leave it there. He promised to take her back, make her his own again when she had

suffered enough and turned back to him. He fulfilled his promise when the time was right.

Pete knew he didn't compare with God, but he was coming to believe that in all this mess with Jenni, he was supposed to get a glimpse of God's longing for his people. If Pete, with his imperfect ability to love, hurt this much over Jenni's rejection of him, how much more did God hurt over even a temporary rejection by his people?

Pete stared out at the Chicago skyline, thinking about what he had just read in Ezekiel 24. God told the prophet that his wife was going to die and that Ezekiel wasn't supposed to mourn for her. But Ezekiel really loved his wife and God knew that. He even called her "the delight of your eyes." Still, God demanded that Ezekiel face his wife's death with dry eyes, just so he could show Israel God's plans for them.

The Israelites were going to lose the "delight of your eyes" – the temple, the Holy City, their sons and daughters – and they wouldn't be able to mourn. They would be taken off into captivity and would "waste away because of your sins."

Taken in context with all that God said through Ezekiel, and Greg had been telling him how important it was to keep bible passages in context, Pete was pretty sure that he had missed the point of this story before. The heart of the problem was that Israel had the wrong "delight of your eyes." They delighted in the things, rather than in the God who gave them. The temple was nothing without the God who inhabited it. The city was only holy because it was the place God had chosen for his dwelling place on earth. The sons and daughters were gifts from God, to be stewarded for him, not delighted in for their own sake. God would have to remove the counterfeit delights of the Israelites' eyes so they could see the real thing, their God.

Ezekiel had it right. In spite of his deep love for his wife, he loved the Lord more. When God called him to show that deeper love and devotion, he stepped up and did it.

Pete felt ashamed of his own behavior these past few weeks. He truly loved Jenni and he believed that it was a God-given love, so he would cling to that love, regardless of her reaction to his past. His error was that he had been living as if Jenni were his reason to live, but she shouldn't be. Jenni was a gift from God. The giver of the gift must be his reason to live, not the gift itself.

He would always ache over Jenni's rejection of him, much like God mourned over his people's rejection of him but it was time for Pete to step up and be a man of God, like Ezekiel. It was time to pick himself up and get on with living for Jesus, not dying inside for Jenni.