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*Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou
envious against the workers of iniquity. —Psalm 37:1*

On a beautiful frosty morning I was out hunting for deer. The one or two deer I shoot each year comprise most of the red meat we eat.

This Tuesday morning was about perfect. A light breeze stirred, and the sun had risen just high enough to touch the western edge of the field with its golden light. I had a sense of expectation that the Lord might provide a deer in these early hours of daylight.

However, some of the people who hunt near us on public land do not abide by hunting laws. I heard a four-wheeler nearby, and soon it came driving along the southern edge of the field I was watching. How would I have a chance at a deer with that machine driving through the field?

I picked up the hunting regulation booklet in my tree stand and turned to the section about using off-highway vehicles. It gave permission to use them before and after legal shooting hours, plus between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. I checked my watch. It was 8:28 a.m.

At that point I felt a rising sense of being wronged. Various thoughts flitted through my mind, and I pondered different courses of action I might take. I prayed that God would give me wisdom in dealing with what had just happened. Two or three minutes had now elapsed since the vehicle passed through the field.

Then God gave me wisdom. “Fret not thyself because of evil-doers,” the Holy Spirit reminded me. I also thought of a challenging article I had read the previous afternoon about areas in life where we need to seek God’s rest. One of the areas was rest from a vindictive desire to see justice done.

As I thought about this situation, God graciously gave me the resolve to simply commit the unlawfulness to Him. Then peace came. Real peace. Whatever happened next was up to the Lord.

I tried to decide what to do next. Since the field had been disturbed, I considered walking to the pickup where my wife was waiting. I could tell her about the five does I had seen earlier and what had just happened. But I decided to stay in the tree stand awhile longer. I turned to 1 Samuel to continue my devotions. The Word was alive, and my heart was at peace. At 8:44 I glanced up to check the field. Three hundred yards away, a buck was walking rapidly, his nose to the ground. He turned away and stopped just as I had him in the crosshairs. When he turned broadside a few seconds later, I squeezed the trigger. He dropped in his tracks scarcely one hundred feet from where the machine had just gone.

Praise the Lord! I thought and then added a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving: “Thanks for answered prayer and thanks for the meat.”

And I wondered, just wondered, if God gave that deer so quickly to impress me with His ability to bless when I obediently follow His leading.