

“The rider standing among the myrtle trees then explained, “They are the ones the Lord has sent out to patrol the earth.” Then the other riders reported to the angel of the Lord, who was standing among the myrtle trees, “We have been patrolling the earth, and the whole earth is at peace.” Zechariah 1:10,11 NLT

## lectio // Zechariah 1:7-17

There are things that happen, everyday and all around us, that we have no idea are going on because we live in a very confined, defined space of reality. We THINK all that exists in the heavens and earth, science and logic is our reality and our understanding. We are so wrong, so selfish to think this. Here Zach has a dream of horsemen gathering among the myrtle trees. One is the angel of the Lord, often a title given to Jesus in the Old Covenant. Just a short mention of those angels that patrol the earth! Like that BLOWS my mind. Here, they report to Jesus, “all is at peace.” What a moment! Of course, there was something off though. Israel, God’s own people were NOT at peace. The whole earth is, but God’s favorite people are not? Jesus sets out to rectify this by having a conversation with God right in front of Zach (in the dream of course). God says, “But I am very angry with the other nations that are now enjoying peace and security. I was only a little angry with my people, but the nations inflicted harm on them far beyond my intentions.” WHAT?! A little angry? Exile into Babylon for 70yrs is a little angry? Wow. Then there’s this other sovereignty scrambling phrase, “inflicted harm for beyond my intentions.” What is that? Why? What? Can man’s behavior go beyond God’s intent or control? Can evil run a little further, do a little more damage, get away with MORE than planned or allowed? Someone smarter than me would have to answer that! God’s timeline was perfect, but this bit about peace for others and then being a little more evil than intended throws me.

## oratio

Dad,  
I am completely comfortable (after all these years) not completely understanding the entirety of what I read in the Bible. I can do that because I believe that you are ALWAYS right, true and just in every situation. But just because I am convinced in your character, does not mean that I am not curious with the things I read and have no answers for. Can humans go beyond your intentions with evil and harm? I can see other, modern, circumstances where that makes sense, but I do not like it at all! Whether it is Hitler or Bashar al-Assad (Syria), this is horrifically wrong. Bring swift justice and judgment to rid these evils and allow the innocent to come to faith and grace in your love.

## contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root