

Deuteronomy 7:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.

Analysis

God's gradual conquest strategy ('by little and little') serves wise purposes: preventing land desolation and wild beast proliferation. This shows divine wisdom in means as well as ends—God's purposes are accomplished at His pace, not ours. Immediate total conquest would have created ecological problems (abandoned farmland reverting to wilderness, dangerous animal populations). This teaches patience in God's timing and methods. God often works gradually in sanctification—progressive holiness, not instant perfection (Philippians 1:6). The phrase 'lest the beasts of the field increase' shows God's care for practical concerns, not just spiritual abstractions. Divine wisdom governs both salvation and the ordinary details of life.

Historical Context

Israel's actual conquest occurred in stages: initial campaigns under Joshua (7-8 years), followed by gradual consolidation over generations. Judges records ongoing conflicts with remaining Canaanite populations. Full territorial control wasn't achieved until David's reign, roughly 400 years after the initial conquest. This gradual process frustrated impatient Israelites but served God's wise purposes. Archaeological evidence shows some Canaanite cities were destroyed (Jericho, Hazor), others captured gradually, and some coexisted for extended periods before final Israelite control.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's gradual timing in your sanctification and circumstances demonstrate His wisdom?
2. What impatience with God's pace reveals about your trust in His sovereign wisdom?
3. How can you faithfully work 'little by little' toward God's purposes without demanding immediate completion?

Interlinear Text

וְנָשַׁל	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	אֶת	הַגּוֹיִם	הָאֵלֵּל	מִפְּנֵי יְיָ
will put out	And the LORD	thy God	H853	nations	those	before
H5394	H3068	H430		H1471	H411	H6440
וְקָטַן	וְקָטַן	לֹא	תֹכֵל	כֹּלֶתָם	מֵהֶרָא	פֶּן
and little	and little	H3808	thou mayest	not consume	them at once	H6435
H4592	H4592		H3201	H3615	H4118	
תִּרְבֶּה	עַל יְיָ	חַיֵּי הַ	הַשָּׂדֶה:			
increase	H5921	lest the beasts	of the field			
H7235		H2416	H7704			