

## **"You will not be able to annihilate them quickly, lest the beasts of the field increase against you." (7:22)**

Hashem assures *Klal Yisrael* of staggering success in vanquishing their enemies. Moreover, it was to be accomplished in a manner that would cause them no harm, even from the wild beasts. By effecting a slow offensive, vast portions of land would not be left unpopulated, allowing for the stray wild beasts to "move in." True, a quick victory could have been achieved, but at an unacceptable price. This seems enigmatic. Would it have been "difficult" for Hashem to simply contain the wild beasts so that they not harm the Jews? Obviously, another reason mitigated for a "slow victory."

*Horav Moshe Shternbuch, Shlita*, cites the *Admor of Modzhitz, z.l.*, who contends that Hashem does not want *Bnei Yisrael* to fight with spirit and intensity. They should not be driven to succeed in battle in the same treacherous manner that the pagans of their day would wage war. A Jew fights only if he must. Even then, he demonstrates a sense of self-control and dignity, doing what is demanded of him as a way of discharging his obligation.

For this reason, Hashem caused the war to go on and on, each day slowly bringing success. This is the homiletic rendering of the *pasuk*. Hashem would not annihilate the pagans quickly, lest you/*Klal Yisrael* become like the wild beasts who fight with guile and treachery. These wild beasts do not know the meaning of compassion; they battle ruthlessly, destroying in cold blood all those who stand in the path of their success.

This is a remarkable lesson for us, especially in light of the manner that the contextual interpretation of the *pasuk* is altered to give a complete new meaning. It also demonstrates that two opposing perspectives can subsist in a given situation. What might be perceived by some as a "practical" approach -- or even an indication of "vulnerability" in Hashem's protection of us -- is in effect a deliberate and profound form of guardianship. If we would only open up our eyes, we might even "see" the exceptional manner in which Hashem safeguards our physical and spiritual well-being.