

"When you shall beget children and children's children and you will have become old in the land and will practice depravity." (4:25)

Moshe did not fear the immediate danger of aberration on the part of *Klal Yisrael*. Rather, he perceived that change would result from being in the land for a while, occurring after the birth of the second and third generations. *Horav S.R. Hirsch z.l.* interprets the word *o,baubu*, "*and you will become old*," in a different manner. *iah* is not like *iez*, the antonym of "young." Rather, it is more closely related to being the opposite of "new" or "fresh." This concept is already suggested by the literal meaning of *iah* as "dark" or "sleep."

Only after the nation has settled in the land and experienced the birth of the second and third generations will they begin to consider themselves as natives. Only then will they be able to forget about their past, their origin in bondage, and their exodus through the kindness of Hashem. Their fresh enthusiasm towards *mitzvah* observance will become insipid. Their attitude towards Hashem, their appreciation of Him for His constant beneficence will become trite and mediocre.

For this reason Hashem has interwoven the fact of redemption from Egypt into the tapestry of Jewish life and observance. This sustained reminiscence maintains our "youthful" enthusiasm, the consciousness of belonging to Hashem. Those who have shirked off this consciousness/yoke have done so because they have forgotten the genesis of their nationhood; they have consigned their origins to oblivion. As we "grow old" even in our land, as our relationship with Hashem "matures," we must continue to maintain the same enthusiastic youthful attitude which prevailed at the onset of our relationship.