

## The Association between Yosef — a Reincarnation of Chanoch — and Chanukah -- to Educate and Enlighten Outsiders

This coming Shabbas kodesh, parshas Vayeishev, is the eve of the eight days of Chanukah. On Motzaei Shabbas, we are scheduled to light the first Chanukah candles. The Zohar hakadosh teaches us a very important principle (Yisro 88a): **“כל ברכאן דלעילא ותתא ביומא שביעאה תליין”**—the six weekdays to come draw all of their blessings and positive influences from the preceding Shabbas. Hence, it is only fitting that we explore the connection between parshas Vayeishev and Chanukah—commemorating the Chashmonaim’s victory over the Greeks and the miracle of lighting the candles with pure olive oil.

Let us begin our journey by examining the pesukim in this week’s parsha that lead up to the sale of Yosef landing him in Egypt (Bereishis 37, 2): **“אלה תולדות יעקב יוסף בן שבע עשרה שנה היה רועה את אחיו בצאן, והוא נער את בני בלהה ואת בני זלפה נשי אביו”**—These are the offspring of Yaakov; Yosef, at the age of seventeen years was a shepherd with his brothers by the flock, and he was a youth with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives.

Why does the Torah refer to Yosef hatzaddik as a “na’ar,” a youth? We find a fascinating explanation in the Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 70, 137a). According to the Tikunei Zohar, Yosef was a reincarnation—a “gilgul”—of Chanoch the son of Yered, who ascended to the heavens while still alive to become the angel Matat, **מט”ט**. This phenomenon is described in the following passuk (Bereishis 5, 24): **“ויתהלך חנוך ואת האלקים ואיננו כי לקח אותו אלקים”**—and Chanoch walked with G-d; then he was no more, for G-d had taken him.

The Targum Yonatan explains: **“ופלח חנוך בקושטא קדם ה’, והא ליתוהי עם דירי ארעא, ארום אתנגיד וסליק לרקיעא במימר קדם ה’, וקרא שמיא מטטרו”ן ספרא רבא”**—and Chanoch served Hashem truthfully; and he is no longer among the inhabitants of earth; for he was taken and ascended to the heavens before Hashem; and Hashem called him Metatron, the great scribe. We find that Chanoch is also referred to as a “na’ar,” as it is written (Mishlei 22, 6): **“חנוך לנער על פי דרכו”**—educate the youth as befits him. Accordingly, Yosef, a “gilgul” of Chanoch is described as: **“והוא נער”**—and he was a

youth (na’ar). This in fact is the source for what the Arizal writes in Shaar HaGilgulim (Intro. 31): **“כי יוסף הצדיק זכה לנשמה זו של חנוך”**—because Yosef hatzaddik merited receiving this neshamah belonging to Chanoch.

Nevertheless, we must endeavor to explain why the Torah chose to reveal this fact to us—that Yosef hatzaddik possessed the neshamah of Chanoch, as indicated by the phrase **“והוא נער”**—precisely before the sale of Yosef. Additionally, we understand that when a tzaddik’s neshamah descends and returns to this world as a reincarnation, it is to rectify a certain flaw that he failed to correct during his lifetime. If so, what tikun did Chanoch require necessitating his gilgul into Yosef hatzaddik?

### Chanoch’s Shortcoming Was that He Failed to Rebuke the People of His Generation

After much thought and consideration, I would like to propose a solution to this puzzling question based on a wonderful principle from the impeccable teachings of the Chasam Sofer (Lech Lecha). Chanoch separated himself from all other human beings so as not to be corrupted by them. He remained isolated with HKB”H in sanctity and purity. As his reward, he ascended to heaven while still alive and was transformed into the “malach” Matat (**מט”ט**).

In contrast, we do not find that Avraham Avinu ascended alive to the heavens to become a “malach.” For, he chose a different path. Rather than remaining isolated all day long communicating only with HKB”H, he chose to fraternize with others outside of his home in order to bring them closer to Hashem. For, Avraham Avinu realized that this was not the purpose for which man was created; he was not created for the purpose of ascending to heaven alive and being transformed into an angel. HKB”H has myriads of angelic creatures above in the heavens. Hence, he created man to serve Hashem in the capacity of a human being. He is meant to associate with other human beings and to introduce them to Hashem and His Torah. As

a result, he merited becoming even greater than the ministering angels—the “malachei ha’shares.”

We have thus shed some light on the matter of the reincarnation of Chanoch’s neshamah into Yosef hatzaddik—because of which Yosef is referred to as a “na’ar.” We have learned that Chanoch failed to step outside of his immediate four amos in order to interact with other human beings and to bring them closer to the Omnipresent. Of course, the matter is not that simple and straightforward; otherwise, Chanoch would not have merited ascending to the heavens alive and being transformed into an angel. Certainly, this is an instance of HKB”H judging tzaddikim to a more exacting degree—as the Gemara (Yevamos 121b) derives from the passuk (Tehillim 50, 3): **“וּסְבִיבוּ נִשְׁעָרָה מְאֹד, מִלְּמַד שֶׁהִקְבִּי מִדְּקָדֵק עִם סְבִיבוֹ כְּחוֹט הַשְּׁעָרָה.”**

Consequently, it was arranged from above that he would be sold to Mitzrayim, the place most identified with immorality. There, he could pave the way for all of Yisrael to safeguard themselves from immorality and sanctify themselves. This fact is expressed by the Midrash as follows (V.R. 32, 5): **“יוֹסֵף יָרַד לְמִצְרַיִם וְגִדְרָה עֲצָמוֹ מִן הָעֲרוּהָ, וְנִגְדְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּזִכְרוֹתָיו. אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא בְרַ אַבְא, כְּדָאִי הִיא גְדוּרָה עָרוּהָ בְּעֲצָמוֹ—שְׁנַגְאָלוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל יְדוֹ”**—Yosef descended to Egypt and safeguarded himself from immorality; in his merit, Yisrael also safeguarded themselves from immorality. Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said: on account of this alone, Yisrael deserved to be redeemed.

It turns out, therefore, that by Yosef withstanding the test and temptation of immorality in Mitzrayim and paving the way for all of Yisrael to remain pure and sanctified, he magnificently completed the tikun required by Chanoch’s neshamah—which had reincarnated into him. Recall that Chanoch’s shortcoming was that he failed to vacate his immediate surroundings in order to draw others nearer to the service of Hashem. Now, however, he left the comfort and security of his father’s home and was forced to endure tremendous hardships in Mitzrayim in order to pave the way for Yisrael to come closer to their Father in Heaven. He did all of this to make amends for what Chanoch failed to do in his previous incarnation.

### **Yisrael in Mitzrayim neshamos that had corrupted their ways in the generation of the flood**

Now, come and enjoy the wonders of the Torah apropos this subject. Our teacher, the Arizal reveals to us in Sha’ar HaPesukim (Shemos) that the reason Bnei Yisrael were subjected to such arduous and extreme servitude in Mitzrayim was because they were in fact the very same neshamos that had corrupted their ways in the generation of the flood. Due to the bitter slavery they endured in

exile in Mitzrayim, they were able to purify themselves and achieve their tikun. Therefore, just as they were punished in that previous existence with the flood, so, too, were they punished in Mitzrayim by means of water, as it is written: **“כֹּל הַבֵּן הַיְלוּד הַיְאוּרָה תִשְׁלִיכוּהוּ”**—all sons that are born you shall throw into the Nile river.

Now, as we learned from the Chasam Sofer, Chanoch’s minor shortcoming was that he failed to step out of his secluded environment in order to rebuke the people of his generation. The generation of the flood resulted as a consequence of his failing to rebuke the people of his generation; they corrupted their ways and eventually reincarnated into Bnei Yisrael in Mitzrayim. In order to correct this failure and shortcoming, Chanoch’s neshamah reincarnated into Yosef hatzaddik; he was sold to Mitzrayim, withstood the test of immorality, and paved the way for all of Yisrael—who were reincarnations from the generation of the flood—to sanctify themselves in Mitzrayim. In this manner, he accomplished the necessary tikun for Chanoch’s neshamah—who failed to rebuke the members of his generation and ultimately led to the generation of the flood.

We can now appreciate why the Torah prefaces Yosef’s sale to Mitzrayim with the revelation: **“אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף בֶּן שֶׁבַע עָשָׂר”** שָׁנָה הִיא רֹעָה אֶת אַחִיו בְּצֹאן, וְהוּא נֶעַר אֶת בְּנֵי בְלָהָה וְאֶת בְּנֵי זַלְפָּה --נִשְׂאֵי אָבִיו— These are the offspring of Yaakov; Yosef, at the age of seventeen years was a shepherd with his brothers by the flock, and he was a youth with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives. The Torah is informing us that the reason Yosef was sold to Mitzrayim was because he was a “na’ar,” a gilgul of Chanoch, who was transformed into the angel Matat. Consequently, it was imperative that he pave the way for the neshamos of the generation of the flood—“dor hamabul”—to sanctify themselves in Mitzrayim.

### **The Connection between Chanoch and the Passuk:**

**“חֲנוּךְ לְנֶעַר עַל פִּי דְרָכּוֹ”**

I was struck by a wonderful thought! The Zohar hakadosh (Bereishis 37b) and all of our holy sources associate Chanoch—who ascended to the heavens while still alive to become the angel Matat—with the passuk (Mishlei 22, 6): **“חֲנוּךְ לְנֶעַר עַל פִּי דְרָכּוֹ גַם כִּי יִזְקֵין לֹא יִסוּר”**—educate the youth as best suits him; even when he grows old, he will not deviate from it. I would like to propose an explanation for the association between Chanoch and this passuk.

Seemingly, we have a legitimate defense for Chanoch’s doctrine of seclusion. As the Chasam Sofer himself explains, Chanoch was fearful that he would be corrupted by the people of his generation. Here is what he writes: **“אֵךְ לֹא הִיא הִקְבִּי בְּטוֹחַ בְּחֲנוּךְ, לְכִשִּׁיתֵּעֲרֵב עִם”**

אנשי דורו ולא יתבודד, היה חששא שיחזור לדרכיהם, ולא יעמוד בניסיון "אברהם אבינו"—HKβH was not so certain about Chanoch; if he interacted with the people of his generation, rather than remaining secluded, he might follow in their ways; he might not withstand the test like Avraham Avinu. If this was the case, Chanoch should not have been held accountable for not correcting the people of his generation; and he should not have had to reincarnate into Yosef.

Therefore, I would like to humbly suggest that the main fault of Chanoch's was that he didn't abandon the security of his own "dalet amos" in order to educate the youth of his generation—those that were yet unfamiliar with sin. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 103b) teaches us that Achaz the King of Yehudah sealed off the Torah. The Midrash (B.R. 42, 3) explains that he was named Achaz, because he seized control of the batei-keneset and the batei-midrash, preventing the children from learning Torah. [Translator's note: the word "achaz" means to seize.] He reasoned: "אם אין גדיים אין תיישים"—if there are no kid goats, there will be no he-goats. Therefore, the main criticism against Chanoch is that he is guilty of not educating the youth to behave properly and sanctify themselves. Had he done so, they would not have strayed and become corrupt as they grew older and matured into adult goats according to the analogy.

This enlightens us as to why Chanoch, the angel Matat, is always associated with the passuk: "חנוך לנער על פי דרכו גם כי יזקין לא יסור" "חנוך לנער על פי דרכו"—educate the youth as best suits him; even when he grows old, he will not deviate from it. This passuk informs us that the main tikun of Chanoch, the Minister of the World, is: "חנוך לנער על פי דרכו"—to educate the child while he is still young; that will insure that he always continues along the proper path—"גם כי יזקין לא יסור ממנה".

How incredible are the words of our sages and their riddles! They reveal to us in the Gemara (Avodah Zarah 3b) that the angel Matat teaches Torah to young children that died in infancy. This is reflected by the formula instituted by the divine poet in the Shacharis service of Simchas Torah: "תקף מטטרון שר, הנהפך לאש מבשר, מלמד מוסר, לילדי" "אור נמסר"—the mighty Minister Metatron, who had been changed from flesh to fire, teaches the Torah, to the children of the one thrown into the fire. Based on what we have learned, he teaches the children in order to make amends for not leaving his home to teach the children of his generation before they could become corrupted.

### חנוך ה' Is the Same Letters as חנוכה

#### Alluding to Matat the Ministering Angel of the World

Now let us continue our spiritual voyage to see how all this connects to Chanukah. We shall begin with an enlightening and amazing idea found in the Shela hakadosh (Mikeitz). He teaches

us that the miracle of Chanukah is related to Chanoch—who is the angel Matat, the ministering angel of the world. As we know, this world was created with the letter "hei." The passuk in Bereishis states (2, 4): "אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם"—these are the products of the heavens and the earth when they were created. The word בהבראם—when they were created—is elucidated as (B.R. 12, 10): "בה בראם"—He created them with the letter "hei." Similarly, this is the allusion in the name חנוכה—the union of the name Chanoch—"חנוך"—with the letter "hei." In other words, the name Chanukah alludes to the inauguration of this world—whose ministering angel is Chanoch, the angel Matat, and which was created with the letter "hei." Here are the holy words of the Shela:

"חנוכה שבו היה חנוכה בית המקדש, והוא רומז לחינוך העולם, כי העולם נברא בשביל התורה וקיום המצוות, והיוונים רצו לבטל תורה ומצוות מישראל, וכשגברו החשמונאים אז נתגברו התורה והמצוות, ממילא נתחנך העולם... כי חנוכה הוא חינוך העולם, ושר העולם שאמר הפסוק נער הייתי וגם זקנתי כמו שאמרו רז"ל (יבמות טז) הוא חנוך, כי חנוך נתעלה ונעלם בתוך שר העולם. והנה כתיב בהבראם, פירש רש"י בה' בראם, עולם הזה נברא בה', על כן כשתוסיף ה' על חנוך הוא חנוכה".

The inauguration of the Beis HaMikdash was on Chanukah; it represents the inauguration of the world. For, the world was created for the Torah and fulfillment of mitzvos. The Greeks wished to abolish Yisroel's dedication to Torah and mitzvos. When the Chashmonaim were victorious, it was a victory for Torah and mitzvos. As such, it constituted a form of inauguration for the world; Chanukah represents the inauguration of the world. (Note that the Shela cites the Gemara (Yevamos 16b) that identifies the Minister of the World, Chanoch, as the one who uttered the passuk: נער הייתי וגם זקנתי—I was once a youth and I have also aged. Once again, we find Chanoch referred to as a "na'ar.")

According to the Shela hakadosh, the world was inaugurated on Chanukah due to the victory of the Chashmonaim on behalf of Torah and mitzvos. Nevertheless, why did our blessed sages see fit to emphasize that there is an integral relationship between the name Chanukah and the union of "Chanoch"—the Minister of the World—with the letter "hei." The implication is that not only did the world require tikun but Chanoch did, as well. It is indeed fascinating to consider what the connection is between Chanoch, the angel Matat, and the miracle of Chanukah.

#### Yosef Possesses the Same Numerical Value as חנוכה

Let us now develop this connection one step further by adding another piece to this amazing puzzle. Just as we have demonstrated a connection between Chanoch, the angel Matat, and the miracle of

Chanukah; so, too, we can demonstrate a connection between Yosef hatzaddik, the gilgul of Chanoch, and the miracle of Chanukah. The Zera Kodesh (Chanukah, fifth night), authored by the great Rabbi of Ropshitz, zy" a, cites the divine kabbalist, the author of the Megaleh Amukos on Vaeschanan (252). He writes that the kedushah of Yosef hatzaddik nullifies the klipah, the negative forces, of Greece, יון (pronounced Yah-vahn). Therefore, we find the following corresponding numerical equivalents: 156) יוס"ף equals מל"ך יו"ן (156))—the King of Yavan--the head of this particular klipah—which also equals 156) (אנטיוכ"ס), Antiochus—the name of the Greek ruler who reigned at the time of the Chanukah saga. Let us present the actual words of the Zera Kodesh:

**"והנה קליפת מלכות יון היתה בקליפה נגד מדת יוסף, כמו שכתב בספר מגלה עמוקות (שם) שמלך יון גימטריא יוסף... ולכן גזרו היוונים לבטל המילה שהוא בחינת יוסף... כי רצו להגביר קליפת ערות הארץ, היפוך יוסף שגדר את עצמו מן הערוה ועמד בניסיון, הגם שהיה במצרים ערות הארץ שהיו כולם שטופי זימה".**

He points out that the klipah of the Greek regime stood diametrically opposite Yosef's attribute of kedushah. It was for precisely this reason that the Greeks outlawed the mitzvah of "milah," which represents Yosef's sanctity. Their goal was to intensify and enhance the klipah of immorality—"ervas ha'aretz"; whereas Yosef accomplished just the opposite. He personally avoided immorality, even though he found himself in Mitzrayim, "ervas ha'aretz," the hotbed of immorality.

Thus, we have demonstrated that both Chanoch and Yosef—Chanoch's gilgul—are connected to the miracle of Chanukah. Nonetheless, we still have to uncover the common thread connecting both of them to the miracle of Chanukah.

It is also worth noting and examining the Jewish custom described by the Magen Avraham (O.C. 670): **"נוהגין הנערים העניים לסבב בחנוכה: על הפתחים"**—it is customary for the poor, underprivileged youth to go door to door on Chanukah. This, too, requires explanation. It is quite true that it is appropriate to give tzedakah to the poor on Chanukah to commemorate the fact that HKB" H acted kindly and charitably with us by performing the miracle of Chanukah. Yet, where do we find that it is customary to give tzedakah specifically to the poor youth? There are surely plenty of poor and needy with families who could benefit from our tzedakah.

### The Chanukah Light to Educate and Enlighten the Youth with Torah

Continuing along the path we began, we will proceed to explain the connection between Chanoch, the angel Matat, and Chanukah and

the connection between Yosef, the gilgul of Chanoch, and Chanukah. We will base our explanation on the formula of "Al HaNissim," which we recite on Chanukah: **"כשעמדה מלכות יון הרשעה על עמך ישראל להשכיחם תורתך"**—when the evil Greek regime rose against Your people Yisrael to make them forget Your Torah. The commentaries are puzzled by an obvious question. How can you make people who have studied Hashem's Torah their entire life forget it? Yet, according to what we have just discussed, the answer is clear. The Greeks attempted to prevent Yisrael from educating their young in the ways of the Torah. This was their strategy. As Achaz reasoned: "If there are no kid goats, there will be no he-goats."

Substantiation for this explanation can be found in the teachings of the Chasam Sofer (Derashot Chasam Sofer, Chanukah, page 66, column 4). He addresses the Gemara's statement (Shabbas 21b): **"מצות חנוכה איש וביתו. פירוש על דרך (בראשית יח-ט) אשר יצוה את בניו ואת ביתו אחריו ושמו דרך ה"**. In other words, the mitzvah to light Chanukah candles is to educate one's children and one's household with the light of Torah. He extends this idea even further in Derushim V'Aggados Chasam Sofer (Chanukah 141a). Here are his amazing words:

**"ומזה יוקח מוסר השכל, שחייב על האב לחנך בנו במדות טובות ומעלות משובחות טרם היותו בן עשרים שנה, וזהו מרומז בנר חנוכה המרמז על חינוך הבנים לתורה ומצוות, כמאמר חכמינו ז"ל (שבת כג): הרגיל בנר הויין ליה בנים תלמידי חכמים, וזהו נר חנוכה - חינוך בנר מצוה ותורה אור. ועל כן (שם כא): נר חנוכה שהניחה למעלה מכ' אמה פסולה, רומז שאם יניח חינוך הבנים מילדותן עד אחר שיהיו בני עשרים, פסול אותו החינוך ולא יצליח".**

This teaches us an important lesson. Every father is obligated to teach his child good "midot" and proper behavior before he reaches the age of twenty. This is alluded to by the laws pertaining to the Chanukah candles, which allude to the education of one's children in the ways of Torah and mitzvos. This is reflected by the statement of our blessed sages (Shabbas 23b): "One who is diligent regarding the mitzvah of lighting candles, will have children that are Torah scholars." This is a reference to the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah candles. Consequently (ibid. 21b), if the Chanukah candles are placed higher than twenty amos, they are invalid. This teaches us that if one puts off the education of one's children until after they are twenty years old, that education is invalid and will not be successful.

As we have learned, this is related to the victory of the Chashmonaim over the Greeks. The Greeks oppressed Yisrael, attempting to make them forget and abandon Hashem's Torah by preventing them from educating the young members of Bnei Yisrael

in the ways of Torah. So, when the Chashmonaim defeated them, they established the practice of lighting the Chanukah candles for a person and for his entire household. This practice was aimed at educating the youth in the ways of Torah, fulfilling the wisdom of the passuk: **“חֲנוּךְ לְנֶעֱרַר עַל פִּי דְרָכּוֹ גַם כִּי יִזְקֵן לֹא יִסּוֹר מִמֶּנָּה”**-- educate the youth as best suits him; even when he grows old, he will not deviate from it.

### The Preferred Mitzvah Is to Place the Chanukah Candles outside One's Door

Our blessed sages instituted the following procedure as the preferred method of fulfilling the mitzvah of “ner Chanukah” (Shabbas 21b): **“תִּנּוּ רַבָּנֵי נֵר חֲנוּכָה מִצּוּהָ לְהַנִּיחָהּ עַל פֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ”**—the Rabbis taught: The requirement is to place the Chanukah candle by the doorway of one's house on the outside. . . and in time of danger, he should place it on his table and that is sufficient. Applying what we have discussed above, we can now better appreciate the reason for this institution. The holy Maggid of Kozhnitz, zy”a, explains this brilliantly in Avodas Yisrael as follows:

**“וְאָמְרוּ גַם כֵּן מִנִּיחוֹ עַל פֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ מִבְּחוּץ, כִּי עֵיקַר הָאֵרֶת חֲנוּכָה לְכָל מִי שֵׁשׁ בְּכוּחוֹ לְהַמְשִׁיךְ הַקְּדוּשָׁה מִבְּחוּץ, רְצוֹנוֹ לֹמַר לְאוֹתָם הָעוֹמְדִים עַדִּין מִבְּחוּץ, וְאִינֵם מְשִׁיגִים הַקְּדוּשָׁה וְלְהַאִיר לְכָל הָעוֹלָמוֹת, שִׁיכִירוּ וְיִדְעוּ כִּי ה' לְבָדוֹ הוּא הַמוֹשֵׁל בְּכָל אַפְסֵי אֶרֶץ.”**

Chanukah is aimed primarily at enlightening those who are still standing outside the realm of kedushah. It is designed to illuminate all of creation, so that everyone will recognize and know that Hashem is the one and only ruler in the universe.

Continuing this line of reasoning, he proceeds to explain the conclusion of Chazal's statement: **“וּבִשְׁעַת הַסַּכָּנָה מְנִיחָהּ עַל שֻׁלְחָנוֹ”**—and in time of danger, he should place it on his table and that is sufficient. Here Chazal allude to the situation of when it is dangerous to attempt to enlighten those who are still beyond the realm of kedushah—for fear that rather than succeeding in enlightening those outsiders, they will be corrupted themselves. Under those circumstances, it is preferable not to go outside. Rather, a person should place his Chanukah candle on his table inside in order to enlighten the members of his household and those that are inside.

This, of course, ties in beautifully with Chanoch's tikun. He was afraid to venture out of his secure environment to enlighten those standing outside the realm of kedushah for fear of being corrupted. Therefore, there is a provision within the mitzvah of Chanukah addressing this eventuality: **“וּבִשְׁעַת הַסַּכָּנָה מְנִיחָהּ עַל שֻׁלְחָנוֹ וְדִיּוֹ”**—and in time of danger, he should place it on his table and that is sufficient. Certainly, though, the ideal method of performing the mitzvah is: **“לְהַנִּיחָהּ עַל פֶּתַח בֵּיתוֹ מִבְּחוּץ”**—to place the candle outside of one's doorway in order to enlighten those standing outside. In particular, it is crucial to educate them while they are still in their youth and have not yet been corrupted.

At this point, we can happily return to the matter of the custom mentioned by the Magen Avraham and which is discussed by the Avodas Yisrael himself (ibid.): **“זוֹהוּ שֶׁכָּתֵב בְּמַגֵּן אַבְרָהָם נוֹהֲגִין הַנְּעָרִים: לְסַבֵּב בְּחֲנוּכָה, וּמְנַהֵגִין שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל תּוֹרָה הוּא, וְרִמּוֹז כִּי צָרִיךְ לְהַשְׁפִּיעַ בְּחֲנוּכָה לְמִי שֶׁהוּא בְּמַדְרַגַּת נֶעֱרַר”**—the Magen Avraham writes that it is customary for needy youth to seek tzedakah on Chanukah; this alludes to the fact that on Chanukah one must try to influence those who have the status of “na'ar,” youth. Then he continues on to add the following:

**“וְעֵינֵין חֲנוּכָה הוּא עַל שֵׁם הַכְּתוּב (מִשְׁלֵי כ"ב-ו) חֲנוּךְ לְנֶעֱרַר עַל פִּי דְרָכּוֹ, דְּהֵיִינוּ שְׁבַחְנוּכָה מִחֲמַת גּוֹדֵל הָאֵרֶה, יוֹכֵל גַּם הָאָדָם שֶׁבְּמַדְרַגַּת נֶעֱרַר לְחַנֵּךְ אוֹתוֹ לְעַבּוֹדָת ה', וְלְהַכִּיֵּן נְתִיבוֹת יוֹשֵׁר לְהַלּוֹךְ בָּהֶם וְלֹא הִישׁוּעָה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאִמְרָנוּ לְעֵיל כִּי עֵיקַר כּוֹוֹנַת הַדְּלָקָה הוּא לְהַמְשִׁיךְ הָאוֹר לְמַטָּה וְלְעוֹמְדִים בְּחוּץ.”**

The essence of Chanukah is conveyed by the passuk (Mishlei 22, 6): **חֲנוּךְ לְנֶעֱרַר עַל פִּי דְרָכּוֹ**. Due to the incredible illumination present on Chanukah, even someone with the status of a “na'ar” can be educated to serve Hashem and to follow a path of righteousness.

As we have explained, this is all related to the tikun of Chanoch—the Minister of the World—who reincarnated into Yosef—who is referred to as “na'ar.” This reincarnation was deemed necessary, since Chanoch required tikun for failing to educate the youth of his generation. Therefore, it is customary for the youth who are poor—alluding to those youth who are uninitiated in the ways of Torah—to go from door to door. This serves as a reminder for Yisrael that it is incumbent upon us to emerge from the security and comfort of our homes in order to spread the light to those standing outside.

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