

D'var Torah:

# Eikev

Office of The  
**CHIEF RABBI**

## Why did the rebbe ask for a cigar?



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In Parshat Eikev, we are told how Hashem is continuously concerned about the land of Israel:

“mereishit hashanah ad acharit shanah,” -  
“from the beginning of the year until the end of the year.”

The Imrei Emet, one of the great rebbes of Gur, would teach that from here we learn how we should always know that Hashem is not just looking at the land of Israel - Hashem is looking at the entire world, at ourselves. Therefore we should be mindful of his presence wherever we are, and at all times.

It so happened that one of the Chassidim of the Imrei Emet came to him and told him, “I’m going to Paris and I’ll be there for a day or two on business. I’ve never been to Paris before. Please, rebbe, give me your bracha.”

The rebbe gave him his bracha and he also added, “Please do me a favour. When you’re in Paris, please buy me a cigar.”

The Chassid felt very privileged to be able to buy a cigar for the rebbe, although he had never heard of the rebbe ever smoking. He went to Paris, he had an excellent day in which things went wonderfully, and he did great business. But as his train began to move out of

Paris, suddenly he remembered, “Oy vey! I forgot to buy the cigar for the rebbe.”

A fellow traveller saw how crestfallen he looked and asked, “What’s the matter?” The man explained, and the traveller said, “Don’t worry! This train will be stopping at Brussels and I know that on the platform you will be able to buy a cigar.” And that’s exactly what happened.

When the Chassid came back to the rebbe, he presented him with a beautiful cigar.

“Where did you get this from?” the rebbe asked.

“To be honest,” replied the Chassid, “I forgot in Paris but this is from Brussels and it’s top quality.” But he noticed that the rebbe was disappointed. “Rebbe,” he asked, “why are you disappointed?”

The rebbe replied, “I didn’t ask you for a cigar because I’m interested in cigars. I asked you for a cigar so that when in Paris you would remember that you’ve got a rebbe.”

And so too, taught the rebbe, wherever we are and under whatever circumstances we are operating, we should be mindful of the fact that we have a guard. Hashem looks down with concern upon us, wanting to shower his blessings within our lives ‘mereishit hashanah ad acharit shanah’ - from the beginning to the end of every single year. If we internalise this very lesson and are mindful of the presence of Hashem in our lives, that will certainly transform everything that we do.

Shabbat shalom.

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