

# Parshas Vaeschanan

# ver and Over and Over and Over and Over

The bochurim from Yeshivas Toras Gavriel excitedly got off the buses at Achziv National Park outside the town of Nahariyya. The entire yeshivah was going on a bein hazmanim "tornado" boating trip in the Mediterranean.

As the boys approached the boating club, they were greeted by a worker who started assigning them to the different boats that were awaiting them. The talmidim of shiur beis took their seats on a boat driven by a friendly man named "Ofir".

"Do you boys want me to drive fast or slow?" Ofir asked them.

"Fast!" all of the bochurim answered at once.

"Excellent," Ofir said with a huge grin.

Soon all of the boats were sailing away from the coast.

"How far away is Rosh Hanikrah?" Tzviki, the bochur sitting closest to the driver asked.

"Oh, just a few kilometers," Ofir answered. "Do you want to go in that direction?"

"Yes!!!" the bochurim answered enthusiastically and the boat zipped off to the north.

After a few minutes Ofir slowed the boat down. The boys looked up and saw the famous yellow and red Rosh Hanikrah cable cars hanging from wires above them.

"Look, there you can see the Rosh Hanikrah caves," said Ofir, pointing at the coast. "Those were formed by the rushing sea water, which cut into the rock."

Ofir got as close as he safely could to the caves and some of the boys took pictures of the beautiful niflaos haborei. A little while later, Ofir turned the boat south and they began picking up speed again, water occasionally spraying them as they cut through the waves.

"Ofir, look! Are those islands?" asked Tzviki.

"They sure are! Here, I'll give you a closer look!" Ofir turned towards the small islands about a kilometer off of the coast.

The bochurim admired the view as Ofir circled the islands, when there was a loud crash and the whole boat gave a huge jolt. Everyone suddenly grew very quiet.

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"Oh no, we appear to have hit a rock," Ofir said, as water began to slowly fill the boat. "Everyone, jump out!"

The boys were a bit nervous, but they were all wearing life jackets, so they all climbed overboard and started swimming towards the closest island.

It didn't take long for the boys to reach the island, where they took off their life jackets and the hot sun began to dry out their clothes.

"Elchonon, is that a daf of Gemara?" asked Levi.

"Yes," said Elchonon, carefully unfolding a soaking piece of paper in his hand. "I copied the amud that I'm currently holding in so I could learn on the bus."

Elchonon gently placed the amud Gemara on a rock so that it could dry out.

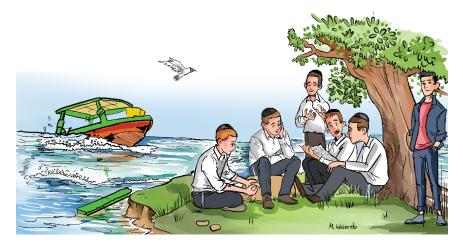
After a few minutes, Ofir said "they are going to send a boat to pick us up, but it is going to take some time because there is a mechanical issue with the boat's engine."

"Levi, do you want to learn with me?" asked Elchonon after his amud Gemara had dried off.

"Sure!" Levi replied as they sat down on a rock and began to learn.

Within a few minutes, all of the bochurim had gathered around and were learning together. It was an easy amud, and after finishing it they went back and started chazering it. Even Ofir, who had nothing else to do, sat listening to them learn.

As the time ticked away, the bochurim kept learning and re-learning the Gemara over and over. Soon, they all knew the whole amud baal-peh and were able to learn without even looking inside.



They were so involved in the learning that they all jumped when they suddenly heard the loud horn of a boat. They looked up and saw a much larger boat than the one they had wrecked about a hundred meters from the tiny island.

Quickly, two men on the boat lowered a rubber raft into the water, and after a few back-and-forth trips, everyone was safely aboard the boat. The men on the boat had brought along bottles of water, which the thirsty bochurim gratefully accepted.

A few minutes later, as they reached the shore, Ofir turned to the bochurim.

"I don't understand," he asked. "You spent several hours learning the same thing over and over and over. You obviously knew it well - you were even saying it by heart! Why did you keep learning? What is the point, once you know it?"

"Ofir," Elchonon said with a smile. "We say every day in Shema 'שְׁנָתְּם'. This means that it's not enough to learn Torah. The mitzvah is to repeat it over and over and over again. No matter how many times we learn something, every time we learn something new. And more than that, the Torah becomes more and more a part of us. The Gemara tells us that someone who learns without reviewing it is like someone who plants a field and then never harvests it. The point of learning Torah is not just to learn it - the constant review is the point because that is what makes it a part of who we are!"

Ofir thought about this. He didn't know much about learning Torah, but what Elchonon taught him made him want to start discovering what it was all about!

#### Have a Wonderful Shabbos!

#### - Takeaway: -

The ideals of Torah are something that we want to make a part of ourselves. It's not enough just to hear something once and move on, we have to review it and review it and never get tired of hearing the same thing over and and over and and over and and over and and over and and over and and over and



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