

V'halachta B'drachav

A Play: A Message in the Sand

By Mrs. Risa Gross

Grade Level: Elementary

Description:

A play within a play in which quarreling brothers learn about gevurah, lev tov and v'halachta b'drachav from a story told by their zaidy. The story about a boy who misinterprets his neighbor's bizarre behavior only to learn later that he is deaf, inspires the brothers to better middos. The play was presented as a wrap up for a v'halachta b'drachav school-wide program but can be used for any middos based lesson or unit.

Goals/Objectives:

Students will internalize the ideas about the above mentioned middos by dramatizing and viewing this play.

Instructions:

- After completing a unit or school wide program which focuses on these middos, have the students perform the play to sum up and reinforce what was learned.

Wrap up V'halachta B'drachov 2007
A Message In The Sand
A Chasdei Hashem Script based on a true stories

Jack in the box on stage

On stage is the 7th grade dressed as toys (soldiers, nurse, Pinocchio big stuffed teddy bear with heart pinned on) Big sign that reads 'MIDDOS TO VOS TOY SHOPS

(The grandfather and boy are walking in from the back)

Rochel: Let's look around while we're waiting for Moishy.

Yocheved comes out

Amy: Hi Yitzy!

Yocheved: Hello.

(Zaidy) Rochel: So boys, tell me again how does this contest you are entering work exactly?

(Yitzy) Amy: Well Zaidy.

(Moishy) Yocheved: Yitzy, I'm older than you. I'll explain it to Zaidy.

Rochel: Now now boys...

Yocheved: Okay... Zaidy, it's like this. You buy the Tovy Torah Album. Then you have to collect or buy or trade the Tovy Torah cards. The first 20 albums filled and submitted to the Tovy Company by Motzei Yom Toy of Pesach gets a chance to enter in the Grand raffle. The first prizewinner is a trip to Israel. There are 2 winners for the second prize, which is a 10-speed mountain bike, and the third prize is a set of seforim.

Amy: You have it mixed up, Moishy, the second prize is the Seforim and the third prize is the 2 bikes!

Yocheved: Oh no, I'm right..

Rochel: Yingelach, please. We are out on a walk to the bookstore to buy you the Torah Albums. Torah Cards you say? Well, you know, I'm sure it says somewhere in those cards how you should be kind to one another and not fight! So let's enjoy this beautiful afternoon.

Yocheved and Amy: OOOokay.. Zaidy..

Yocheved: Zaidy.. Look, that must be a new store. It's called the Middos Tovos Toy Shop. What a funny name for a toy store! Zaidy, look at those toy soldiers.

Rochel: I actually think that Middos Tovos is a very good name for a toy store. Why look at those toy soldiers. They can represent Gevurah, strength. Both being physical strength and inner strength.... Like trying hard to avoid fighting with your brother.

(Boys Laugh)

Amy: I get the idea Zaidy. Look, there is Pinchos-occio. You know his story. If he didn't tell the Emes than his nose would grow. (everyone laughs)

Yocheved: The nurse doll can represent Rachamim and show compassion for all of the hurt soldiers.

Rochel: You've got the idea boys. Now, there is a big teddy bear with a huge heart. He can represent Chesed, kindness. That reminds me of a teddy bear I knew a long time ago

Amy: You had a teddy bear Zaidy?

Rochel: Well, it wasn't actually mine but it was very special.. ..(looks at watch) Oh boys, we better get going. You know what? I'll run across the street to the sefanm store to pick up the Sefer I need and buy you your Torah Albums and you can stay here and admire the toys. I'll be back in a few minutes.

Yocheved: Wow, Yitzy, look at those Toy soldiers. Look how real they look. Let's imagine they are the brave Jewish soldiers who fight for KIall Yisroel.

Amy: Yeah, Moishy, maybe they were the Maccabim who followed Yehuda HaMaccabee. "Mi L'Hasem Au" and they took out their swords.

(He lunges forward and fights with an imaginary sword in hand.)

Yocheved: Let's go inside and check them out, Yitzy.

Amy: Okay!!!

(Chiming sound and door opening sound effects~) The boys walk through the toys.

Yocheved: Yitzy. I have never seen such amazing toy soldiers. They look so real! Wow, unbelievable! Yitzy what do you think? How could I get these toy soldiers? I really want them. Imagine the games we could play. "pow,, pow, pow"

Amy: You know, we would have to make a deal with Mommy and Tatti. Maybe we could learn the Parsha every week, by ourselves, for 2 months and then have Tatti test us. He would be so proud. Then, for sure, they would buy us these soldiers.

Yocheved: (annoyed) Oh yeah, (mimicking) Let' just learn the whole Chumash by ourselves. Why not? You may be my younger brother, but you are always the smarter one. Yeah, learning the Parsha is easy for you to do by yourself but not for me! You always have to show off ,Yitzy. Just remember, I am older. I am going to come up with a way to get those toy soldiers myself. You go ahead and study your head off. I'll do it myself.

Amy: But Moishy, I didn't mean it like that. I thought we could study together.

Yocheved: Together, Yeah right. You would know the whole thing by heart and get the soldiers while I.. I.. never mind! And you know what Yitzy? I'm going to collect all of the Torah stickers for that album and win the prize to Eretz Yisroel, all by myself. I'll show you! Tell Zaidy, I went home.

Amy: (Starts crying to the big teddy bear) I always make him so angry. I really meant that we would learn together and share the toy soldiers. He is really the best big brother, I try very hard to use Gevurah and not fight with him. I know he cares about me. (Dejectedly)

I better find Zaidy.

(Yitzy leaves. Toys wake up and sing song)

Choir “Listen brother”

Amy is speaking animatedly to Rochel

Rochel (Zaidy on far corner of stage): Yitzy, you know Moishy really loves you. It’s just that things come a little easier to you. He has to work harder than you at certain things and I guess that makes him a little jealous.

Amy: But Zaidy, jealous? He is the best older brother. He always looks out for me on the school bus and he always makes sure I have my lunch. Why, he even lets me have the prize from the cereal box. I would help him study, but I just know it would make him even angrier with me.

Rochel: I’m so proud of you, Yitzy. You really are emulating Hashem by V’Halachta B’drachav. You’re not fighting with Moishy. You’re having Rachamim and being kind to him, even if, at the moment, it seems that he is not so kind to you. Don’t worry, Yitzy, he will come around.

(Moishy is off to the side musing):

Yocheved: I get so upset with myself. I know I shouldn’t take it out on Yitzy. I have to use my own Gevurah and not be angry. It is not his fault that sometimes I feel that he is better than me. He is still my little brother. I have to learn to be more patient. I know that. Maybe there is some way that I could show him how much I really do appreciate him. I have to come up with some great idea. Maybe a surprise.... Hm....

Rochel: Yitzy, remember that teddy bear we saw in the Toy Shop? The one with the big heart? Go tell Moishy to come and listen. I will tell you both about a teddy bear I met, a long time ago. A teddy bear with a big heart... listen to this story.

Amy gets Yocheved

Risa: This is a story of heart. How in our hearts, we have the ability and capacity to emulate Hashem’s ways. V’Halachta B’drachav. It is a story of Rachamim- compassion, a story of Chesed- kindness, a story of Gevurah- inner strength, a story of Emes- truth. The essence of the story is in all of our hearts. We just have to take a look deep inside of our selves. There, we will find the Yud Gimmel Middos- all of the Middos, which we use to emulate Hashem.

Ari was not really talented in any way. At least, it didn’t seem that way. He was just a regular kid. He didn’t excel in school. He wasn’t the best ball player. He was very quiet and a loner — someone, you would classify as an introvert. He didn’t have any friends. His life was pretty run of the mill. He would go to school every day and come home directly after school. He never played with the kids on his block. He didn’t even have any brothers or sisters to play with. He was very shy and he was very lonely. He would just do his homework and go to his room. Now... you have never seen a room like An’s. In his room, he had a huge toy collection. There were shelves and shelves of toys. The toy box overflowed and the rest were lined up neatly in rows on the floor. An adored toys and he would collect them. Every Chanukah, birthday or Afikoman, Ari would get a chance to get a new toy. Every time, his parents would go on a trip they would bring back a different toy. Why, An had toys from different countries- special toys, interesting toys that you might have never seen before. An would add them all to his collection. When An would enter his bedroom it was like entering a different world. It was like a dream, like walking into an

imaginary world where anything could happen. An would weave together stories and make plays starring his toys. That is what An loved the most. His friends were his toys.

One day, Ari's life took on a drastic change. It happened the summer his grandparents rented a beach house in South Haven, Michigan. It was a charming little clapboard house that shared a private beach with only one other house. The beach was on the shore of Lake Michigan;

Ari loved the beach. He loved the feel of the hot sand between his toes as he ran near the water's edge. He loved building sand castles with the wet sand. He loved the sun warming his shivering body after he jumped the waves. He also loved getting up early with his grandfather to watch the sunrise and then go to daven. His davening became that much more meaningful as he appreciated Hakodesh Baruch Hu's magnificent creations. that he enjoyed every day. An spent most of his waking day on the beach and sometimes if his Zaidy and Bubby would let, he would camp out in a tent close to the house. An did bring part of his toy collection with him that summer. After all, he would have been very lonely without some toys. But somehow, he was very busy on the beach so the toy airplanes, kites and toy soldiers lay abandoned in his room at the beach house.

Learning with his Zaidy also became very important to An. It was a special close time with his Zaidy, just the two of them on the patio, together. This summer they decided to learn about the Yud Gimmel Middos- about V'Halachta B'Drachav and emulating Hashem's ways. What better subject to learn about with the background sound of the mighty waves crashing against the rocky jetty.

An (Zipora): It was an idyllic serene summer until some two weeks ago when David, an 8 year old boy, moved in to the other house that shared the beach. Now David was nothing short of being just the biggest show off He would run off into the lake and he would take a small board that he fashioned into a surfboard and he would ride the waves All the while, he would wave at me to make sure I saw all of his latest feats. Sometimes. I would just turn away. Sometimes though it was mesmerizing to watch David and his antics. I would watch him play volleyball with his father. The ball would fly back and forth, back and forth. David would never get out. Even his father missed, quite a few times. David was an excellent sportsman; which only infuriated me that much more. He's got to be at least two years younger than me!!!

(Music blaring)

Zipora: Zaidy, really that David, makes me so angry! Here we are trying to learn and he has his music blaring.

(Zaidy 2) Tzivie: It's okay An sometimes we have to be more patient with people. Patience is a good Midda. It can help us understand people better. David is enjoying himself. The music is not bothering me. But if the music is distracting you, we can go inside and learn and get a drink of Bubbie's delicious lemonade, while we're at it.

Zipora: (reluctantly) No it's okay Zaidy, if it isn't bothering you than it isn't bothering me either.

Tzivie: I'm proud of you Ari, you are being so tolerant and that is another good Middah to emulate.

Zipora: (looking at David aghast) Zaidy, look at David now! Now, he is really acting crazy. He is jumping up and down almost on top of the CD player. Now, he is putting his ear to the ground and he is thumping his whole body on the ground. Now look Zaidy, he is sitting almost on top of the music and doing a little jig. He is totally toasted, Zaidy.

Tzvie: Now Ari, we just learned the other day about V'Halachta B'drachav. How we should be more tolerant and have compassion for other people. How we should emulate Hashem's ways. If that is how David chooses to enjoy his music, it is fine with me.

Zipora: I guess, you're right Zaidy.

Risa: An and David spent the better part of the week just eyeing each other. They watched each other's every move. Ari noticed that David seemed to have many different toys that he played with on the beach. Some were toy airplanes and some were trucks that were sand diggers. An really admired David's kite. It was a huge kite with a long multi colored tail. Ari would watch as David would run really fast and the wind would catch the tail of the kite and the kite would soar way up into the sky and spin round and round forming a kaleidoscope of colors.

An decided the next time he would get a toy he would ask his parents for a kite just like David's. An saw that there was always one toy that was constantly on the beach when David was out and that was a huge Bear with a big heart pinned to it. It seemed like a constant companion to David. An didn't make fun of the Bear at all. He understood that the bear was there as David's friend. Who could understand better than An what it means to have only toys as friends.

Many times, An would go out of his way to make sure David would notice that he was very busy spending time learning.

(Chani waves to Zipora)

Zipora: See how David always does that Zaidy?

Tzvie: Does what? All I saw him do was wave at you. In fact I think David has very nice Middos. Every time he sees you, he acts friendly and motions to you in a very friendly way.

Zipora: Well, if he is so nice and friendly Zaidy, why doesn't he come over here and be genuinely friendly?

Tzvie: Maybe, he is not sure you want him to come over. After all, you haven't been so friendly yourself. Let's go back and see what we were learning the other day about the Yud Gimmel Middos. Treating everyone as a beloved relative and focusing on the other person's positive qualities. Ari, I really think you are misreading David's intentions. I think he would really love to be your friend.

Zipora: I'm tired Zaidy, but I'll think about it.

Shayna: The next morning, An woke up, especially, early. He went to sit outside on his patio. He noticed David and his father were also up very early just returning from a walk on the beach. David's father hugged him and then they had some kind of exchange that An couldn't figure out. But David stayed behind still waving to his father as he watched him disappear into the house. David glanced at Ari and then took a stick and started to draw something in the sand. It took him a little while.

Zipora: I wonder what it is that David is drawing? Was he an artist too? He was just so good at everything. Was there anything David couldn't do? I know why I don't want to be his friend. He will probably just make me feel bad that I'm just well, mediocre at everything. Now, what's going on? David is motioning to me to come over and see what he has drawn. Well, I won't. uh, uh. No, I'm not interested. "NO". He can't hear me from so far away.

Shayna: Well, David waved to An to come over but An wouldn't come .So, David gave up and just ran back to his beach house.

Tzivie: An, Good morning, my, you are up so early. Let's say, we go for a little walk on the beach. We are too early for the Minyan and we have a couple of minutes.

Zipora: (cooking to make sure David is not around) Well okay. Zaidy, I guess. (Zaidy and Ari come up to the picture that David drew,~

Zipora: Why that's not a picture at all. It is a message. It says "Why won't you be my friend?"

Tzivie: Well Ari? What is this about? Who wrote it? And look, there is a discarded teddy bear, full of sand.

Zipora: I think the bear is David's. I guess David wrote that message.

Tzivie: So where is your compassion? Your Rachamim? Of course you must treat David kindly and be a friend to him.

Zipora: You're right Zaidy, it's just, he is so good at everything. I feel really stupid next to him. To really get to the Emes, I guess I'm a little jealous. He is just so talented at everything! And he looks so much younger than me!

Tzivie: I can see exactly what you mean, An. But, here is your chance to put to use all of the beautiful Middos that we learned about and emulate Hashem. We have to see the truth and justice when we deal with people. David is really innocent here. After all, you two haven't even spoken one word to each other. Remember, Vahavta Lrayacha Kamocha.

Now, right after davening you should come back and ring David's doorbell. Think about it, An.

Zipora: You are right, Zaidy. (Zaidy walks away)

Shayna: Ari stood looking at the message drawn in the sand and then took a quick glance over his shoulder. He saw David looking out the window at him. He had a big smile on his face and was making some kind of funny motions.

Zipora: Zaidy really is right. Oh, look there is David in the window. Wait a minute. He is laughing at me! He is mocking me! Oh no, you don't! Be your friend? Well, that is not how friends act. Oh... I'll write you a message, all right!

(An takes the stick and writes a new message)

(A ni admiring his handiwork)

Zipora: "Friends don't make fun and laugh at people. Goodbye! (An storms off)

Risa: David ran down to the sand to read the message. He started to tremble his legs folded underneath him He grabbed the teddy bear and started to cry.

An stormed back to his patio and didn't even give David a backward glance. Until, well... Ari did turn around and

Zipora: What is he doing? Oh, he's such a big shot! (change mood) Wait, he looks upset. Is he crying?

Risa: An stood stock still, watching the scene unfold. David was crying as he held onto his bear. Ari then said to himself...

(A whisper over the mike while An stands there frozen) MUSIC

Zipora WHISPER: Look how that little boy is crying because of me!
I really didn't use any of the Middos I learned. I didn't treat David with compassion.
What happened to my heart? Where is my love for another Yid? David only wanted to be my friend. That's all. Look how badly I have treated him- and cause him such pain.

I didn't use my Gevurah. I didn't treat David with Rachamim. David is younger than me. Where is my Chesed- my kindness?

Risa: As Ari talked to himself about how badly he treated David he inched his way back to where David was sitting in the sand calling his name.

Zipora: David, David
David, I've been a creep. Really, I do want to be your friend.

Risa: David didn't look up. Ari inched closer until David saw the tips of his shoes. David looked straight up at Ari face. (An kneels down).

Zipora: David, I said, I really do want to be your friend.

Risa: David was sad and now looked puzzled. David ran to get the stick and quickly scribbled in the sand.

Zipora (reading slowly). * "I was hoping to make a friend, someone real, not just this bear David, I'm standing right here; just talk to me.

(David writes) *I can't, I am deaf

Zipora: (shocked) What?

DAVID MAKES IT VERY OBVIOUS TO THE AUDIENCE THAT HE TAKES A PAD AND PEN TO WRITE.

Shayna: An anxiously reads what David wrote.

Zipora: I read your lips when you talk. I can't speak so well either.

Zipora: (~shaking with emotion) David, you are a star at everything. I was so jealous of you. I am so sorry.

(‘Zaidy comes strolling over. David takes the pad and pen and is writing, frantically)

Tzivi: An, David is writing another message to you, have patience, he is almost done.

Shayna: An is shaking as he reads David’s new message. (‘Zipora is looking over Chani ~ shoulder)

Zipora: An, this is the way Hashem made me. I get to serve Hashem in my own special way. The same way you get to serve Hashem in your own special way.

Zipora: OH! That’s why you had the music on so loud.

Chani continues writing then Zipora reads

Shayna: David continued to write a message to Ari. Let’s listen to what he wrote.

Risa: Ari, I don’t hear the music the same way you do. But I, sort of, hear it in my head. It makes me want to dance and it makes me happy, the same way it does for you. Ari, I have never heard the sounds of birds chirping or the ocean waves. But, when I stand on the beach watching for the next mighty wave, I feel the sand moving under my feet. Then, I see the wave coming. I feel the mighty roar of the water getting bigger and bigger as it rises higher and higher. It fills me with excitement. Then the waves come crashing down into frothy white foam at the shore edge. I am washed to shore full of the joy of having taken pleasure in one of Hashem’s creations.

Tzivi: Ari, David can only enjoy the music by feeling the vibration. That is why he has to play it so loud and why he sits almost on top of it.

Zipora: But Zaidy, why didn’t you tell me. . .and how did you know?

Tzivi: Well, I know, because out of concern for David that - maybe the music was a little too loud- I called his parents and they told me. Why didn’t I tell you? Well An ,we were learning the Middos of Hashem and how to act and think and feel. So, I knew you would come to it all on your own. That way you would keep what you learned in your heart, always.

Zipora: Zaidy, I really have learned a lesson. I can appreciate now, when I look back on this past week, how many times David made an effort towards me and I wouldn’t give him a chance. He had tremendous Gevurah to keep trying to be my friend. Waving at me and doing those antics in the sand to entertain me. He was inviting me to be his friend in his own way. But, I was too stubborn and wouldn’t look at his beautiful Middos. He was tolerant and patient and forgiving. Even though, I was anything but nice to him. He tried so hard to be nice to me.

(Ari goes over and puts his arm around David, An picks up the bear)

Zipora: (looking straight at David) Forgive me David. I would love to be your friend. (starts walking away) Say, why don’t you show me your toy collection and maybe then we can fly that cool kite you have. And then we’ll go learn together! (they fade out walking away)

Rochel: Yes, that was a very special teddy bear. It accompanied us the whole summer, everywhere.

Amy: (surprised) Us... Zaidy? Oh Zaidy.. I just got it! You mean you are the same Ari as in the story?

Rochel: Yes boys. It's my story. It's a story of heart. How that summer, being friends with David, I learned so many things like patience and Raehamim, Chesed and tolerance. I learned all of those things from David and much more. Because he had a Lev Toy and an Eyin Tova. He had a big heart and only saw the good in people. David focused on their positive qualities.

Amy: You know what Zaidy? I will use my Ge~rurah too. Just like An in the story (I mean you Zaidy) and I'm going to collect those stickers for Moishy. I know how badly he wants to win the Torah Card Contest.

Shayna: And so, Yitzy collected the Torah stickers and traded until he had a complete book. He was so excited he made the deadline in to the raffle. In the meantime, Moishy was doing the exact same thing. He was collecting, trading and buying stickers frantically so he could finish the book. He also entered the raffle. He wrote Yitzy's name on the book and ticket. Lag Ba'omer and the day of the raffle drawing arrived. The boys waited, anxiously, for the winner to be announced. Yitzy's name was drawn!!!! He couldn't believe it!

Amy: There must be some mistake. I didn't even enter the raffle.

Yocheved: Yes, you did I made the album for you. I want to show you that I am working on my Middos to be a better brother.

Amy: Moishy you are the best brother any one could ask for! (they hug and start whispering and walk away)

Risa: And so, that day great lessons were learned. Lessons of heart. Lessons of Gevunah and Rachamim. Lessons of forgiveness of letting go of anger, of seeing beyond the bad that someone did. Of treating everyone kindly.

Choir song.