



Among the mitzvot that the Torah teaches is kindness to animals, tza'ar ba'alei hayim. This public water dish is in Tel Aviv, Israel. It is there for dogs that are thirsty.

“Very good,” said Elijah. He then explained that the Torah is the first five books of the Bible. “Each book is divided into portions. We read one portion in synagogue every Shabbat. It takes a year to read the entire Torah. Then we start again!” said Elijah. “Simḥat Torah is the day we finish the last portion and begin again by reading the first words of the Torah. Simḥat Torah means ‘Joy of the Torah.’”

The Five Books of the Torah

The five books of the Torah are

Genesis	בְּרֵאשִׁית
Exodus	שְׁמוֹת
Leviticus	וַיִּקְרָא
Numbers	בְּמִדְבָּר
Deuteronomy	דְּבָרִים

Rivkah arrived and joined the conversation. “We take all the Torah scrolls out of the synagogue’s Ark on Simḥat Torah,” she said. “People march seven times around the sanctuary carrying the Torah scrolls. The parades are called **hakafot**.”



On Simḥat Torah many synagogues welcome new students to the mitzvah of Jewish learning, Talmud Torah, by holding a Consecration ceremony.

Welcome to Talmud Torah!

Describe two things you now know about the Jewish holidays that you didn't know when you began religious school.

1. _____

2. _____



Simhat Torah Riddle

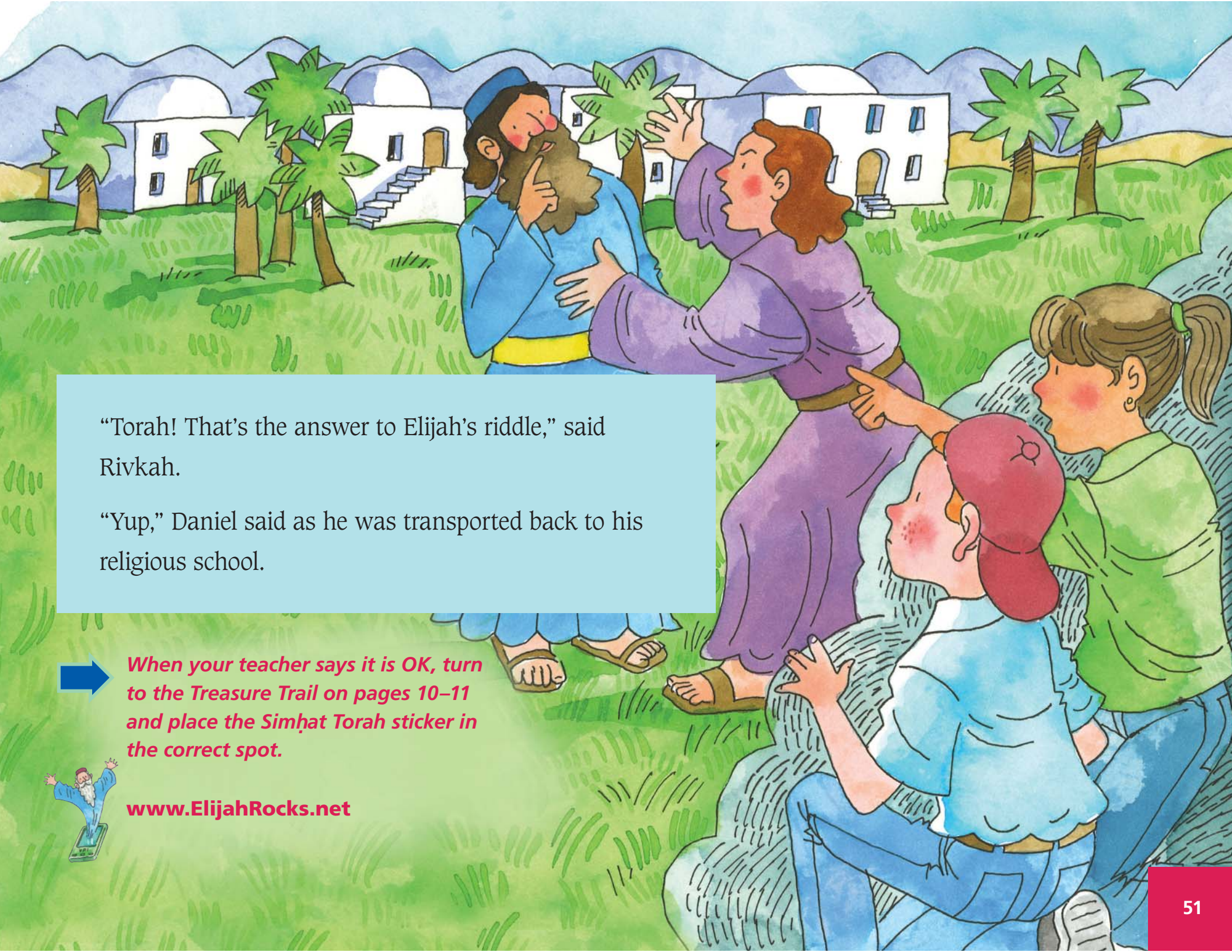
What teaches us the Jewish way? What gift from God guides us each day?

“That’s what we do, too,” piped in Daniel. “We sing and dance as we parade with the Torah scrolls around the sanctuary.” Then Daniel noticed that Elijah had disappeared. So he and Rivkah selected the Treasure Trail.

When the riddle faded, Rivkah and Daniel were surprised to find themselves crouched behind a rock, peeking at two men dressed in clothes from ancient times. One seemed angry. He yelled, “What do you mean you can’t? Everyone says that you, Hillel, are the wisest teacher. If so, teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot and I’ll become a Jew.”

“OK,” answered Hillel. “Do not do to other people what you don’t want them to do to you. That is the whole Torah. All the rest is explanation. Now, go and study

it.” *(This story comes from the Talmud, Shabbat 31a.)*



“Torah! That’s the answer to Elijah’s riddle,” said Rivkah.

“Yup,” Daniel said as he was transported back to his religious school.



When your teacher says it is OK, turn to the Treasure Trail on pages 10–11 and place the Simḥat Torah sticker in the correct spot.



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