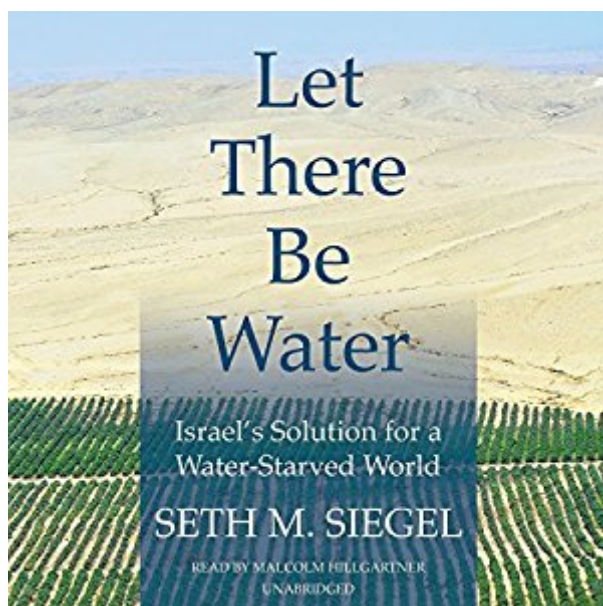


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# Let There Be Water: Israel's Solution For A Water-Starved World



## Synopsis

As every day brings urgent reports of growing water shortages around the world, there is no time to lose in the search for solutions. The United States government predicts that 40 of our 50 states - and 60 percent of the earth's land surface - will soon face alarming gaps between available water and the growing demand for it. Without action, food prices will rise, economic growth will slow, and political instability is likely to follow. *Let There Be Water* illustrates how Israel can serve as a model for the United States and countries everywhere by showing how to blunt the worst of the coming water calamities. Even with 60 percent of its country made of desert, Israel has not only solved its water problem; it also has an abundance of water. Israel even supplies water to its neighbors - the Palestinians and the Kingdom of Jordan - every day. Based on meticulous research and hundreds of interviews, *Let There Be Water* reveals the methods and techniques of the often offbeat inventors who enabled Israel to lead the world in cutting-edge water technology. *Let There Be Water* also tells unknown stories of how cooperation on water systems can forge diplomatic ties and promote unity. Remarkably, not long ago, now-hostile Iran relied on Israel to manage its water systems, and access to Israel's water know-how helped to warm China's frosty relations with Israel. Beautifully written, *Let There Be Water* is an inspiring account of the vision and sacrifice by a nation and people that have long made water security a top priority. Despite scant natural water resources, a rapidly growing population and economy, and often hostile neighbors, Israel has consistently jumped ahead of the water innovation curve to assure a dynamic, vital future for itself. Every town, every country, and every listener can benefit from learning what Israel did to overcome daunting challenges and transform itself from a parched land into a water superpower.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Seth Siegel has written a fascinating, engaging and highly readable book telling the story of how Israel went from chronic water shortages to being a water-exporting nation roughly between 2001 and 2013. Most people probably don't feel they need to know how this happened. But the story of Israel's struggles and ultimate triumph over the scourge of water scarcity is a drama so exciting, and it has such an exhilarating ending, that anyone who picks up this book will end up being very happy they did. Siegel picks up the story of water scarcity in Israel in the 1930s, when British experts were issuing one report after another arguing that the Jews trying to flee Nazi-dominated Europe just could not be physically accommodated in British-controlled Palestine. The Zionists, headed by David Ben-Gurion, sought to prove the British wrong, and thus was born the Israeli effort to turn a half-arid, half-desert land into a water-rich country capable of sustaining millions. Along the way, Siegel has a great time telling how the Jews got water to their illegal settlements in the Negev desert; how the National Water Carrier brought the Sea of Galilee to the southern deserts and made the city of Beersheva possible; how Israeli-invented drip irrigation proved that it could not only save half the agricultural water needs of the world, but could do so while at least doubling crop yield for just about anything farmers grow; how Israeli engineers turned waste water from a repulsive pollutant and a health hazard into a central pillar of Israeli agriculture; and how desalination of Mediterranean sea water finally went from a dream to a reality in just the last few years. This is truly a feel-good story. But Siegel also sheds light on some dark times and some dark issues.

When you realize that Israel exports two billion dollarsâ™ worth of water from a tiny desert state overflowing with people, it might be instructive to know what it is theyâ™re doing. Seth Siegelâ™s book is an in-depth, tightly focused and exhaustive look at the totality of what the country has accomplished in water. There are three basic levels to the story. PEOPLE must be conscious of their water consumption and actively minimize it. The need has forced TECHNOLOGY to take leaps and bounds that have vaulted Israel to world leadership in water management. And unusually, there is the POLITICAL WILL to manage natural resources nationwide for the benefit of all, even to the point of co-operating regionally. With these three arms working together, and the only place on earth where all three are firing in sync, Israel is the poster child for survival. On the people level, everyone

shuts off showers while soaping up, closes taps when teethbrushing, and uses dual flush toilets Israel pioneered. Flow restrictors are on all showers, lush gardens are actively discouraged. On the tech level, Israelis invented and perfected drip irrigation - to where crops need a fraction of the water (and fertilizer) that flood or spray irrigation requires, and produce more. Israel has pioneered improvements in desalination, allowing it to let lakes and rivers recover naturally while desalination provides the country's water - to the tune of more than 90%. In management, Israel recycles 85% of sewage (vs 8% in the USA). and sends it to agriculture. Even toilet paper is recovered and recycled, reducing landfill and increasing processing capacity by 30%. Israel is now actually short of sewage, because people have so reduced their water consumption.

“I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs.” - Isaiah 41:18 As 2015 winds down, and we look backward on history's hottest recorded summer ever, perhaps it's time to consider the future. As entrepreneur and philanthropist Seth Siegel writes, changing rain patterns severely threaten human populations. The California drought offers a foretaste of impending crop failures, urban stresses, and ecological catastrophe. Siegel directs our attention to the one nation with a long history of forward-thinking water policies: Israel. The state of Israel has pioneered important advances in how to use and improve our water consumption since before the state existed. They've developed ways of moving water from where it exists to where the people need it, allowing high-yield agriculture in regions traditionally arid, even in historic deserts. They've improved water use techniques, increasing farm yields with less water, while cities consume less, leaving farmers and wildernesses more. Siegel provides an intriguing mix of history and science, describing not only what advances Israel has made in water management, but also why it made particular advances. He describes the unique political, economic, and geographic pressures shaping Israeli water policy. The mix of intense regional water close to lifeless desert was, recently, almost unique to Israel. But as Siegel notes, if environmental trends continue, similar conditions may soon exist globally. First, Israeli culture doesn't disparage water. Children never sing “Rain, rain, go away.” • Israel nationalizes water access, making all water everywhere a common good.

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