

Unit: 5th Grade Sukkot
Lesson: Simchat Beit HaShoevah (Festival of water-pouring)

Enduring Understanding:

Water plays an important part in the Tanakh and in the lives of modern Israelis.
“Ein Mayim, Ein Torah” (No Water, No Torah)
People celebrate water as a source of life.

Essential Questions:

How is water conservation different in America and Israel?
Why do we need water?

Goals:

SWBAT define Simchat Beit HaShoevah
SWBAT recognize the subtle difference in prayers we say before/after Sukkot
SWBAT discuss the importance of water
SWBAT list differences between Israeli and American water needs

Lesson Plan

Hook:

Chalk Talk about Water conservation (pull on knowledge from Gen Studies), students get to write one way they help conserve water on the board. Short discussion about what works/what doesn't work in their lives. Biologically, what would happen if we didn't have water?

Maps of Israel - each table group will receive a map and identify bodies of water in Israel.
(answers: Kinneret, Jordan River, Red Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Dead Sea)

Table groups will each receive a way Israelis conserve water with discussion questions:

-How practical is this method?

-Is this something we are able to do in America?

(short showers, washing dishes, one-two toilet flush handles, smaller washing machines, fixing leaky pipes, high cost of water, drip irrigation, reusing “gray water” for crops)

Look at Kinneret water graph on projector, show what the different lines mean. Town Lake - relate it to Austin

<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/science/1.698275> article on drip irrigation

Study short Torah stories about water - stories of the waters of Mara and Moshe hitting the rock to bring forth water. Why is water important in these stories? What would have happened without divine intervention?

In ancient times, aka Torah, they didn't have "drip irrigation" and "desalination plants" - water was a very scarce resource. It could also be dangerous if it came at the wrong time - or if it didn't come at the right time. Water is needed to grow crops, and without crops you literally have no food, Moses couldn't just go to HEB! So who did ancient Israelites turn to but God. Lets look at a prayer for rain that we still say to this day.

Pass out Geshem prayer, tell them to highlight/circle every time water/mayim appears. Water was still crucial in the time of the great Rabbis and the Holy Temple

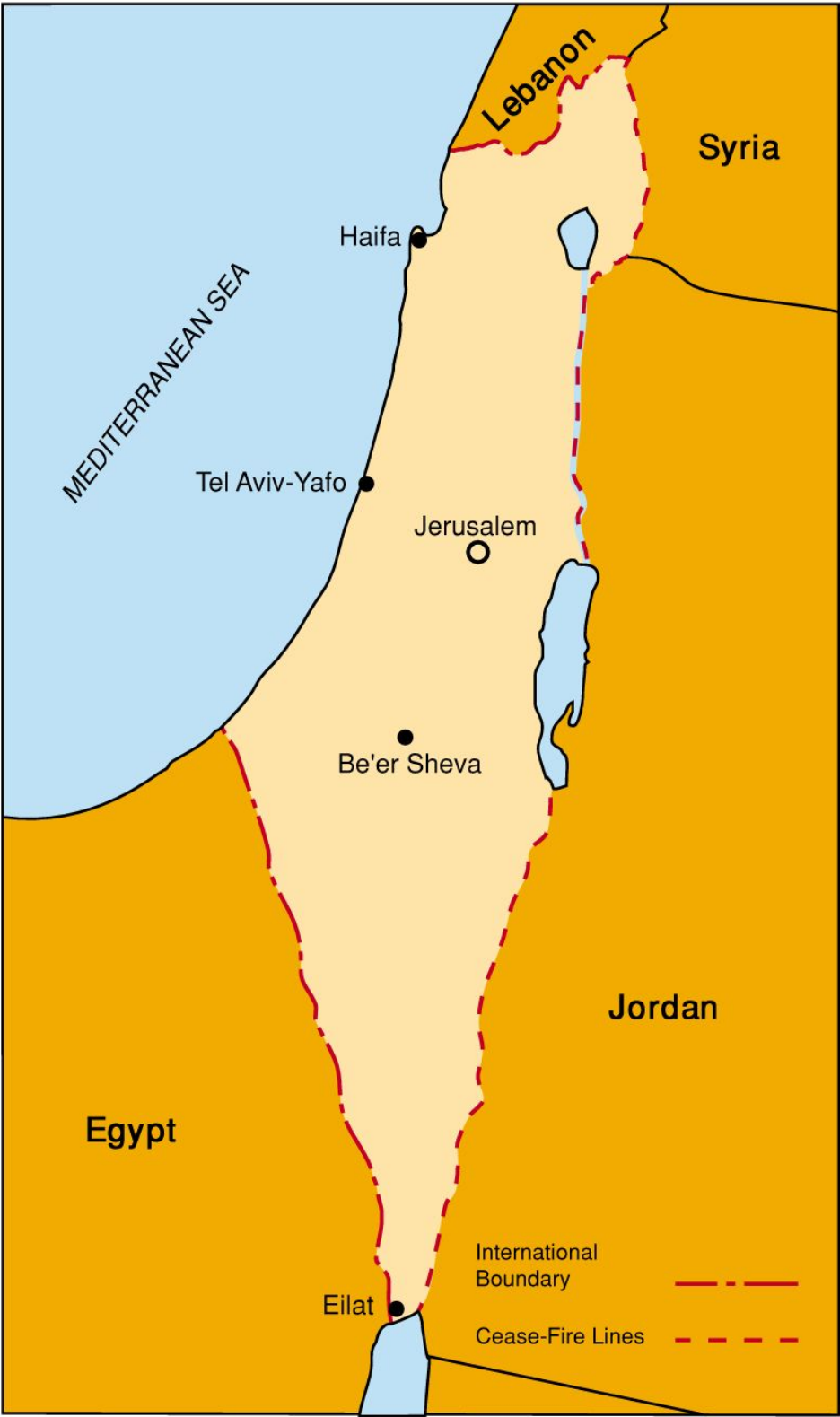
Ein Mayim Ein Torah: Random fact about not going without water OR Torah reading for more than 3 days at a time

Re-enact the "Simchat Beit HaShoevah" that they would do in the Temple every Sukkot!!!!

Simchat Beit HaShoevah: request the use of a patio from library or art, or go outside or to the sukkah. set up a table with a toy/stuffed animal on it as the sacrifice and demand for everyone to be happy (laughter meditation?).

Ask a few students if they remember why it is so important to ask for water at this time of year. Take answers (crops, water is scarce in desert, few sources of natural water in israel).

Symbolically pour water over the table while everyone rejoices.



Israel within Boundaries and Cease-Fire Lines, 1993

THE WATERS OF MARAH

Then Moses caused Israel to set out from the Sea of Reeds. They went on into the wilderness of Shur; they traveled three days in the wilderness and found no water.

They came to Marah, but they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; that is why it was named Marah.

And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood; he threw it into the water and the water became sweet. There He made for them a fixed rule, and there He put them to the test.

He said, "If you will heed the LORD your God diligently, doing what is upright in His sight, giving ear to His commandments and keeping all His laws, then I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians, for I the LORD am your healer."

And they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; and they encamped there beside the water.

Why is water important in this story?

What would have happened without divine intervention?

MOSES HITS THE ROCK

The Israelites arrived in a body at the wilderness of Zin on the first new moon, and the people stayed at Kadesh. Miriam died there and was buried there.

The community was without water, and they joined against Moses and Aaron.

The people quarreled with Moses, saying, "If only we had died when our brothers died at the instance of the LORD!

Why have you brought the LORD's congregation into this wilderness for us and our beasts to die there?

Why did you make us leave Egypt to bring us to this wretched place, a place with no grain or figs or vines or pomegranates? There is not even water to drink!"

Moses and Aaron came away from the congregation to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and fell on their faces. The Presence of the LORD appeared to them, and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

"You and your brother Aaron take the rod and assemble the community, and before their very eyes order the rock to yield its water. Thus you shall produce water for them from the rock and provide drink for the congregation and their beasts."

Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as He had commanded him.

Moses and Aaron assembled the congregation in front of the rock; and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, shall we get water for you out of this rock?"

And Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. Out came copious water, and the community and their beasts drank.

But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust Me enough to affirm My sanctity in the sight of the Israelite people, therefore you shall not lead this congregation into the land that I have given them."

Those are the Waters of Meribah—meaning that the Israelites quarrelled with the LORD—through which He affirmed His sanctity.

Why is water important in this story?

What would have happened without divine intervention?

Our God and God of our ancestors:
Remember Abraham who flowed to You like water.
You blessed him like a tree planted by streams of water.
You rescued him from fire and water.
He passed Your test by planting good deeds by every source of water.
For Abraham's sake, do not keep back water.
Remember Isaac, whose birth was foretold when Abraham offered the angels a little water.
You asked his father to spill his blood like water.
In the desert Isaac dug and found wells of water.
For Isaac's sake, do not keep back water.
Remember Jacob, who crossed the Jordan's water.
He bravely rolled the stone off the mouth of the well of water.
He wrestled with an angel made of fire and water,
And therefore You promised to be with him through fire and water.
For Jacob's sake do not keep back water.
Remember Moses, who was drawn in a reed basket out of the Nile's water.
Who helped Jethro's daughters: He drew water and gave the sheep water.
He struck the rock and out came water.
For Moses' sake do not hold back water!
Remember Aaron, the High Priest, who, on Yom Kippur, washed himself five times with water,
He prayed and was sprinkled with purifying water,
He kept apart from a people who were as unstable as water.
For Aaron's sake do not hold back water.
Remember the Twelve Tribes whom
You brought through the divided waters;
For whom You sweetened bitter water;
Their descendants' blood was spilled like water.
Turn to us, God, who are surrounded by troubles like water.
For the Jewish people's sake, do not hold back water.
You are Adonai, our God
Who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall.
For blessing and not for curse. Amen.
For life and not for death. Amen.
For plenty and not for lack. Amen.