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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/122/2021_2022__E7_8E_8B_E9_95_BF_E5_96_9C-_c84_122388.htm Fresh water life itself , has never come easy in the Middle East. Ever since the Old Testament (旧约圣经) God punished man with 40 days and 40 nights of rain , water supplies here have been dwindling. The rainfall only comes in winter , Inshallah Good willing and drains quickly through the semiarid land , leaving the soil to bake and to thirst for next November. The region ‘ s accelerating population , expanding agriculture , industrialization , and higher living standards demand more fresh water. Drought and pollution limit its availability. War and mismanagement squander it. Says Joyce Starr of the Global Water Summit Initiative , based in Washington , D.C. “ Nations like Israel and Jordan are swiftly sliding into that zone where they are suing all the water resources available to them. They have only 15 to 20 years left before their agriculture , and ultimately their food security , is threatened. ” I came here to examine this crisis in the making , to investigate fears that “ water wars ” are imminent , that water has replaced oil as the region ‘ s most contentious commodity. For more than two months I traveled through three river valleys and seven nations from southern Turkey down the Euphrates River Syria , Iraq , and on to Kuwait ; to Israel and Jordan , neighbors across the valley of the Jordan ; to the timeless Egyptian Nile. Even amid the scarcity there are haves and have notes. Compared with the United States , which in 1990

had a freshwater potential of 10000 cubic meters (2.6 million gallons) a year for each citizen , Iraq had 5 500 , Turkey had 4 000 , and Syria had more than 2 800. Egypt ' s potential was only 1 100. Israel had 460 , Jordan a meager 260. But these are not firm figures , because upstream use of river water can dramatically alter the potential downstream. Scarcity is only one element of the crisis. Inefficiency is another , as is the reluctance of some water poor nations to change priorities from agriculture to less water intensive enterprises. Some experts suggest that if nations would share both water technology and resources , they could satisfy the region ' s population , currently 159 million. But in this patchwork of ethnic and religious rivalries , water seldom stands alone as an issue. It is entangled in the politics that keep people from trusting and seeking help from one another. Here , where water , like truth , is precious , each nation tends to find its own water and supply its own truth. As Israeli hydrology professor Uri Shamir told me : “ If there is political will for peace , water will not be a hindrance. If you want reasons to fight , water will not e a hindrance. If you want reasons to fight , water will give you ample opportunities. ”

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