

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

“Limnot yameinu ken hoda, venavi levav chochmah” — “Teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom” (Psalm 90:12, recited each year as the old year winds down.)

Or, as Churchill put it: “The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.”

- With Rosh Hashanah closing in fast, here's this week's roundup of the good, the generous and the quietly hopeful.
- Israeli scientists at the Weizmann Institute have overturned a long-held assumption about how cancer takes hold. The team, led by Dr Ariel Afek, found that DNA mutations aren't simply random: the physical shape of a DNA strand can attract or block the enzymes that repair it, helping explain why certain genetic sequences are especially prone to becoming cancerous. A Pittsburgh researcher not involved in the study called it a discovery that "will have a long and lasting impact on the field." There's still a long road from this insight to new treatments, but understanding why some mutations stick is a real step toward eventually stopping them.
- On the tech side, Tel Aviv-based agtech firm CropX has made its eighth and largest acquisition yet, buying fellow Israeli company SCIO, the portable crop-testing technology formerly known as Consumer Physics. SCIO's handheld and cup-based sensors, already deployed on some 10,000 devices worldwide, measure a crop's moisture, protein and sugar content on the spot, without a lab. Bolted onto CropX's existing soil and weather data, it gives the platform a rare closed loop, connecting decisions made at planting to the quality of what actually comes off the field months later — the kind of unglamorous, practical innovation that quietly keeps Israel's agtech sector near the front of the pack.
- Israel's humanitarian instincts kicked in again this week, this time for Nepal. Within 48 hours of catastrophic flash floods and landslides that killed hundreds and left thousands missing along the Nepal-Tibet border, IsraAID had a team on the ground in Kathmandu, focusing on relief supplies and mental health support, with NATAN Worldwide Disaster Relief sending its own team of medical and psychosocial specialists close behind. Both organisations have a long history in Nepal, going back to the 2015 earthquake response — proof that when disaster strikes anywhere, Israel's aid groups tend to already have their bags packed.
- After a wildcat strike threw Ben Gurion Airport into chaos on its busiest day of the year, management and the workers' union have reached an agreement to keep things running smoothly through the upcoming Jewish holiday season. It's good timing: more than 3 million travellers are expected through Israel's airports and land crossings this month, with Rosh Hashanah beginning on the evening of September 11. The union called it a "new leaf" built on partnership and trust — which, ahead of the year's busiest travel stretch, counts as good news for anyone flying in for the holidays.
- On the northern border, Israel is set to release five Lebanese detainees this week as a goodwill gesture coordinated with the United States, continuing a pattern of similar releases aimed at keeping talks with Lebanon moving over prisoners, the missing and the border itself. The detainees are civilians rather than Hezbollah operatives, according to Israeli officials — a small, deliberate step, but one aimed at nudging a fragile relationship in the right direction.
- And Israeli drivers caught a break at the pump: after gasoline prices hit an all-time high of NIS 8.25 a litre this week, the Attorney General approved an excise tax cut that brings the price back down to NIS 7.75 from Sunday night. Not a dramatic swing, but a welcome one heading into a season when most people will be doing more driving, not less.
- A quieter week on the good-news front than some, perhaps, but between a genuine scientific advance, aid on its way to Nepal, and a few small steps in the right direction closer to home, there's enough here to take into the new year.



In Loving Memory

GN Israel is proudly brought to you by Joe, Barry and Adi Cohen, in loving memory of Mark Cohen z"l, who founded this newsletter and ran it until 2011.

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Have we missed any Good News? Do you have any comments? Please let us know at joe@angloraanana.com.

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