QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"Hayipale me'Hashem davar?" — "Is anything too wondrous for the Lord?" (Genesis 18:14, from Parashat Vayera, read this Shabbat: Abraham runs to welcome three strangers into his tent, and is told that Sarah will bear a son.)

- This Shabbat we read Vayera, which opens with Abraham running to welcome strangers into his tent. Hospitality, in other words, is a very old Israeli habit, and this week the world was returning the favour with a rather pleasing pile of good news.
- The International Monetary Fund has raised its forecast for Israel's economy in 2026 to 4.5% growth, up a full point from its April estimate of 3.5%, with 4.4% expected in 2027. In plain English: the IMF thinks Israel's economy will grow faster than any other advanced economy in Europe, where the group average is just 1.3%. It also expects prices to rise by only 1.8% this year. Growth with low inflation is what every finance minister dreams of, and they rarely get it.
- The Bank of Israel left its interest rate unchanged at 3.25% on 21 October, which means borrowers, including anyone with a variable-rate mortgage, face no increase, although no cut either. The bank also published its own forecast of 5.6% growth in 2026 and 7.5% in 2027, with inflation at only 1.6% in September. A small health warning: those headline figures include the output of Israeli companies operating abroad. Counting only what is produced in Israel, the bank expects 3.4% growth this year and 5.1% next year, still very respectable.
- Israeli cyber-security companies raised at least $2.4 billion from investors in 26 funding rounds between July and September, roughly 46% of all the money invested in the sector worldwide, according to figures reported by Calcalist's CTech and Jewish News. Island and Cyera led with $400 million each. What it means: the world's investors are betting big that Israeli companies will keep the world's computers safe, which is good news for the high-tech job market. (The 46% is approximate and depends on how deals are counted.)
- In Israeli-made medicine, Teva has won US FDA approval for Weltruza, a once-a-month injection for adults with schizophrenia. Until now the same medicine, olanzapine, meant a pill every day, and Teva says that sticking to a daily pill is a real challenge for many patients. The hope is that a single monthly jab will keep more people on their treatment and mean fewer relapses. It was approved on 9 October after a trial of 675 adults and is not yet approved in Europe.
- Israel's Health Ministry has announced the country's first national trial of MDMA ("ecstasy") and psilocybin ("magic mushrooms"), each given together with psychotherapy, for hundreds of people whose severe PTSD has not improved with standard treatment, according to Ynet and the Jewish Chronicle. The benefit, if it works: new hope for people who have run out of options. Note that it is a trial to find out whether it works, not a treatment you can ask your doctor for, and it is expected to run for several years.
- In the lab, researchers at Ben-Gurion University, led by Dr Aeid Igbaria, found two proteins, DNAJB12 and DNAJB14, that help stressed cells avoid self-destructing. The catch is that cancer cells seem to use the same trick to survive chemotherapy. The potential benefit: if scientists can switch that trick off, chemo might one day work better. This is early work on human cells in the lab, published in *Redox Biology*, and nobody has been treated with it yet, so no one should rush to the pharmacy.
- Four Israeli companies were named to TIME's 300 Best Inventions of 2026, according to the Times of Israel. SpotitEarly trains dogs to sniff breath samples, with AI analysing the dogs' responses, to flag possible cancers early. (Dogs, it seems, still have the best noses in the business.) Beewise makes a solar-powered robotic beehive that monitors and treats the bees, helping to protect the hives that pollinate our food. Bria is a generative-AI

platform that pays royalties to the artists whose work shapes its output. And Aidoc uses AI to flag urgent findings in medical scans so that doctors see the most serious cases first.

- Olympic champion Artem Dolgopyat won bronze in the men's floor final at the World Gymnastics Championships in Rotterdam on Saturday, his fourth world championship medal (one gold, two silver and now bronze). American Frederick Richard took gold and Britain's Jake Jarman silver. Teammate Noam Berkovich, who also reached the final, finished seventh. The trophy shelf at the Dolgopyat household is filling up nicely.
- Archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority have uncovered about 300 metres of the Lower Aqueduct near Ramat Rachel in Jerusalem, a water channel roughly 2,000 years old, while a new neighbourhood was being planned. It carried water some 21 kilometres from Solomon's Pools with no pumps, using gravity alone. IAA archaeologist Amit Re'em called it “an engineering marvel.” Two thousand years on, and it still outperforms some municipal plumbing.
- Israel took part for the first time with its own national defence pavilion at the Marrakech Airshow in Morocco, held 7–10 October. Eight Israeli firms, including Elbit, Israel Aerospace Industries and Rafael, exhibited, according to Al Jazeera and the Times of Israel. It follows a September agreement to upgrade Israeli and Moroccan diplomatic offices to full embassies, and it means closer ties, and more export opportunities for Israeli industry, with a friendly neighbour.
- In music, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra has opened its 90th season under Music Director Lahav Shani, with concerts in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa. The orchestra gave its first concert on 26 December 1936 as the Palestine Orchestra, conducted by Toscanini, and took its present name in 1948. A 90th Anniversary Festival is planned for January 2027 with Zubin Mehta, Martha Argerich and Maxim Vengerov. Not many ninety-year-olds can still fill a hall.
- And for something lighter: the Jezreel Valley won the Best Resilient Practice in Wine Tourism award at the Iter Vitis Awards in Croatia on 9 October. Iter Vitis is a network of wine routes certified as a Council of Europe Cultural Route, and the award honours a region that keeps its wine tourism growing through difficult years. The Jezreel Valley's “Wine Valley” initiative links 18 wineries, and its digital “Taste Pass” connects visitors with local farms, restaurants and heritage sites. Somebody has to do the tasting.
- Growth forecasts, monthly injections, an ancient aqueduct and a ninety-year-old orchestra still in fine voice: that's GN. Shabbat shalom, and have a good week.



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