QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"Four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant." (Genesis 23:16, from Parashat Chayei Sarah, read this Shabbat: Abraham buys a burial plot for Sarah, paying the full asking price, openly, in front of witnesses. Possibly the first recorded property deal in history, and still a model of how to do it.)

- This Shabbat we read Chayei Sarah, which includes what may be the first property deal on record: Abraham pays the full price, in front of witnesses, with no hidden fees. A fitting start to a week of rather larger deals.
- Intel has agreed to buy Israeli quantum-software company Classiq, for a reported $2.3 billion in cash and shares. Intel has not confirmed the price; the figure comes from Israeli business reports. Quantum computers are a new kind of machine expected to solve some problems far faster than today's, and Classiq's software lets companies use them without needing a PhD in quantum physics. Its customers include BMW, Citi and Rolls-Royce. The deal is expected to close in the first half of 2027, subject to approvals. For Israel it is one more proof that the biggest names in technology come shopping here. (Quantum, we are told, is where something can be yes and no at the same time. This deal is a definite yes.)
- A second Israeli technology company has found a buyer: California-based Unconventional AI is acquiring NeuReality, which designs chips and systems for running artificial intelligence. The price was not disclosed, and the deal is cash and shares. About 40 NeuReality employees will join the buyer, which will keep a presence in Israel, and the deal is expected to close in the last quarter of this year. The buyer says it wants to build AI chips that use far less electricity, which matters because today's AI is a very hungry customer of the power grid.
- Israel's pension system has been ranked fifth in the world, with a top "A" grade and a score of 81.9 out of 100, in the 2026 Marsh CFA Institute Global Pension Index, which covers 55 countries. The index asks three plain questions: will retirees receive enough income, can the system keep paying in the long run, and are savers properly protected? Only six countries earned an A: the Netherlands, Denmark, Iceland, Singapore, Israel and Australia. What it means for you: the system behind your pension is considered among the world's soundest. (Retirees can relax, though not too much. Someone still has to mind the grandchildren.)
- Israeli start-up Bites has raised $40 million, led by PeakSpan Capital, bringing its total funding to $55 million. Bites turns a company's manuals and procedures into short training videos of up to 90 seconds, each with a quiz, sent through apps workers already use, such as WhatsApp, in more than 150 languages. Its customers include Unilever, Coca-Cola and Shake Shack. The benefit: staff who work on their feet, in restaurants, shops and warehouses, can learn the job on the phone in their pocket, without installing yet another app. Finally, training you can watch while waiting for the bus.
- President Herzog this week honoured the Jewish Federations of North America for its Israel small-business loan fund. About $92 million of donations, together with bank financing, has become more than $240 million in loans to 4,132 small businesses since October 2023, supporting an estimated 28,000 jobs. Less than 0.5% of the lent money is more than a year overdue, and repaid money (some NIS 257 million) has been lent out again. About 48% of the loans went to the north, the Gaza border communities and the northern Negev. A loan that keeps on giving and, unusually, gets paid back.
- Surgeons at Clalit-Beilinson Hospital in Petah Tikva have performed Israel's first robot-assisted lung transplant. Led by Dr Yury Peysakhovich, the team used the da Vinci surgical robot through several small incisions, instead of opening the chest and spreading the ribs as usual. The patient needed almost no pain relief beyond paracetamol and spent less time in intensive care and in hospital than expected. About 20 such operations have been done worldwide, the first in Spain three years ago. The hope: smaller wounds, less pain and a quicker recovery, and the

surgeon expects the approach could become standard in Israel within five years. It is one patient so far, so we say mazel tov and wait for more results.

- At Ben-Gurion University, about 40 students from more than ten departments are taking part in the “Atom Challenge”: four teams will each design a concept for a small modular nuclear reactor of 60 megawatts, suited to the Negev and possibly paired with desalination. Nobody is building a reactor; the university says the aim is to train a new generation of experts and help Israel make informed choices about nuclear energy. A panel will pick the winning design in May 2029. Homework on a somewhat larger scale than the usual essay.
- The Gal'on Fortress in the Guvrin Forest, about 40 minutes south of Jerusalem, has reopened to the public after a NIS 400,000 restoration by KKL-JNF and the Israel Antiquities Authority. The stone citadel is about 3,200 years old, from the 12th century BCE, the time of the biblical Judges. Visitors will find the restored rooms, parking, a picnic area and an accessible path to the citadel. A 3,200-year-old building with wheelchair access: more than can be said for some modern ones. A great place to visit with the family.
- Culture Club singer Boy George is in Israel for two concerts in Tel Aviv: at the Menora Mivtachim Arena on 4 November, and on 7 November, when the show is dedicated to the Nova festival community and their families. He was welcomed in Jerusalem by President Herzog on 2 November, is due to visit the Nova memorial site in Re’im, and has released a song called “We Will Dance Again”. Tel Aviv, we expect, will oblige.
- Arkia has announced its 2027 schedule, including the first regular nonstop flights by an Israeli airline to Iceland, from Tel Aviv to Reykjavik starting in June 2027, according to Ynet (Icelandair has flown the route in the past). It joins Arkia's new Tel Aviv–Manila route from 3 January 2027. The benefit: more choice for travellers, and the northern lights without a connection. For Israelis, the main challenge will be packing a coat.
- Quantum deals, a robot-assisted lung transplant, a 3,200-year-old fortress and Boy George in Tel Aviv: that's GN. Shabbat shalom, and have a good week.



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