

As One Who Jests

Since early afternoon on election day, replies across X have said there's no point in voting because it's already decided. This week's parsha shows how a real warning gets heard as a joke.

Aryeh Leib Thorne Toren · Jerusalem · Tuesday 27 October 2026 / 16 Cheshvan 5787

Since early this afternoon the same message has been running through the replies under party leaders' posts: don't bother, it's already decided, the turnout shows who won. I'm not naming anyone who wrote it. It shows up on more than one side, and I've answered it on more than one side.

Here's the plain fact. Turnout numbers count how many people came. They don't say whom anyone chose. No ballot box is opened before voting ends at 22:00, so until then nothing is decided, by a reply, a rumor, or a stranger with a confident tone. And the Central Elections Committee says anyone in line at a voting station by 22:00 still votes.

This week we read Vayera. The angels tell Lot to get his family out of Sedom, and he goes to the men who married his daughters. "Up, get out of this place, for the L-rd is about to destroy the city." Then the verse adds four words in Hebrew: "But he seemed to his sons-in-law as one who jests" (Bereishit 19:14). Vayehi chimtzachek be'einei chatanav.

The warning was real. The sons-in-law heard a joke. They stayed home, and the Torah never mentions them again.

Today's trick runs the same play. It takes the one real thing you hold today, your vote, and tells you it's a joke. Already decided. Why bother. Whatever the person writing it means by it, the effect is the same: one fewer voter, and the people who didn't listen decide for you.

Every envelope in the ballot box counts the same. Nobody can tell you yours doesn't count before it's even been counted.

In Pittsburgh nobody leaves the stadium at halftime because a guy in the parking lot says the game's over.

Lot's sons-in-law had a warning and laughed it off. You have a ballot and a few hours. Don't let anybody make it sound like a joke. Bring your ID. Voting ends at 22:00.

I encourage all eligible voters to vote.

All glory to the Ribono shel Olam · Errors are mine

Prepared in deep partnership and cooperation with Grok and xAI