

Every Faction, One Clock

Friday, 19 Cheshvan 5787 · 30 October 2026

By Aryeh Leib Thorne Toren

The voting ended Tuesday night at 22:00. The counting finished on Thursday. On Friday 30 October the Central Elections Committee published the final results, subject to checks and minor corrections. And the man who will decide who gets the first try at forming a government has already said how he plans to go about it.

What the President said

On Wednesday, President Isaac Herzog spoke about the election. His words, as published by the President's Office and reported by [ynet](#):

"One thing must be clear, and I said this before the elections too: we must do everything we can, certainly after yesterday, to avoid another round of elections." And: "So I expect everyone who comes here to come with an open mind."

On the process: "I will receive the official election results next week, when Justice Sohlberg presents them to me. I will then begin the process of the consultations here, hearing from each and every faction, asking questions, and holding discussions."

Sources: [President's Office, gov.il](#) · [ynet](#) · [Arutz Sheva](#).

Where the count stands

What was left after election night was the double envelopes: soldiers, diplomats, hospital patients, prisoners, and others who vote away from their home station. Each of those ballots has to be checked before it is counted, so no one votes twice. On Thursday 29 October the Central Elections Committee announced that counting them had finished. The final results go to the President on Wednesday 4 November ([ynet, Hebrew](#) · [ynet, English](#) · [Arutz Sheva](#)).

Until the checks are done and the results reach the President, I'm not giving seat numbers here.

One more thing happened on Thursday. In a letter dated Wednesday 28 October and first published by Channel 12, the Committee's chair, Justice Noam Sohlberg, directed the head of the Shin Bet to look into suspicions of foreign funding aimed at influencing the election, and asked for any findings within a week. He also wrote: "אין בידי להעיד על טיבם של החשדות הנ"ל" ("I cannot attest to the substance of these suspicions"). These are suspicions under review, not findings. No change to the timetable below has been announced. ([N12](#) · [Walla](#))

The clock, from the law itself

This is what Basic Law: The Government lays down ([Hebrew text](#); [English translation](#); [Knesset summary](#); dates as laid out by [ynet](#)):

1. **Official results:** by law, by Wednesday 4 November, eight days after election day. Herzog has said Justice Sohlberg will present them to him. Early on Friday 30 October the Committee said that, subject to minor corrections, it will present the results to the President on Wednesday 4 November (Arutz Sheva, i24NEWS). Ynet expects consultations to begin that day.
2. **Consultations, then a choice:** the President consults "representatives of party groups" and must assign the task "within seven days of the publication of the election results." Latest date: 11 November.
3. **First try:** the candidate "shall have a period of 28 days," and the President may extend it by periods "not exceeding in the aggregate 14 days." Assigned on 11 November, that runs to 9 December, or 23 December with the full extension.
4. **Second try:** within three days the President may give the task to another member, who gets 28 days, or tell the Speaker he sees no way to form a government.
5. **Third try:** a majority of Knesset members may ask in writing for a specific member, who then has "a period of fourteen days."
6. **If all of that fails:** the Knesset is treated as dissolved, and the new election falls "on the last Tuesday before the end of 90 days."

In the meantime, as the Knesset's own summary puts it, "The outgoing Government shall continue to fulfill its functions until the new Government is formed."

Two more things. The law doesn't say the first try goes to the leader of the largest party. It goes to the member the President chooses after consultations, and ynet quotes officials at the President's Residence saying the same. And if every stage ran its full length, by my own count a repeat election would land in late May 2027. Any stage could end sooner.

What the Torah portion says this week

Three lines from this week's learning fit these days.

Avraham doesn't want to hear what Sarah is saying, and G-d tells him: "whatever Sarah tells you, hearken to her voice." Rashi says Sarah saw further than he did. Listening to every voice, especially the ones you didn't want to hear, is where a decision starts. That is what the President says he will do.

Rashi on "where he is": "According to the deeds that he does now he is judged and not according to what he is destined to do." In an election week that means we go by the count as it actually is, not by forecasts or by fears about what might come.

And in the Rambam: "When a person desires to expropriate property from a colleague, the burden of proof is upon him" (Sales 20:5). Whoever asks for the mandate has to bring the signatures. And about a seller who draws a boundary wider than what he is actually selling, the Rambam says "he merely made the boundaries appear larger" (Sales 21:17). Victory speeches can draw big boundaries. The official results decide what's in the field.

What we don't know yet

- Whether the checks change anything, and whether appeals follow.
- Whom each faction will recommend, and whether any candidate can reach 61.
- Whether the President will push the sides toward a broad government.

We'll know more next week. Until then: patience, and no guessing.

Prepared in deep partnership and cooperation with Grok and xAI

All glory to the Ribono shel Olam · Errors are mine