

Herzog-Livni Ticket Implodes the Night Before Israeli Elections

Who is Isaac “Buji” Herzog? Is he ready to be Israel’s next Prime Minister?

Can this quiet, self-effacing head of Israel’s opposition party be trusted to protect the country from numerous and rising threats, from Iran and ISIS to Hezbollah, Hamas and the PLO?

And will Israeli voters remove Benjamin Netanyahu—who is serving his ninth year as premier—from power and put the untested Herzog in the top spot?

These were several of the big questions on people minds here as the last day of campaigning wrapped up. The polls have opened for what very well could prove the most consequential Israeli national elections in a generation.

Over the next couple of days, I will be blogging and Tweeting extensively on the race. But here are a few initial thoughts:

1. The breaking news here tonight is that Herzog is dropping his political partner, Tzipi Livni, from the ticket. The two have been running for the last several months as a team in a “rotation agreement.” That is, “buy one, get one free.” If you vote for their combined faction (two political parties running together) and they win the most seats in the Knesset (parliament) then Herzog had promised to serve as Prime Minister for two years, and Livni for the second two years. But Livni is very unpopular. Within their parties, the rotation agreement was very unpopular. There was growing pressure to remove her from the ticket, but some strategists on the left feared doing so this late in the game would

reflect badly on Herzog and raise questions about his judgment and ability to lead.

Nevertheless, at the 11th hour, Livni announced that she will no longer be part of the rotation agreement. She says she's dropping off voluntarily, yet some say Herzog pushed her off. This is a late-breaking story. The details are not yet clear. Neither are the implications. A highly dramatic election has just gotten far more dramatic.

2. Herzog says, "I trust the Obama Administration to get a good deal." In a must-read interview in *The Atlantic*, the left-wing Israeli opposition leader indicates that he trusts the direction that President Obama is going in with Iran. This is a huge dividing line for Israelis who increasingly distrust the American administration.

3. Herzog proudly says he will divide Jerusalem and roll Israel back to the pre-1967 lines (or close) to create a sovereign Palestinian state. In another must-read interview, Herzog is not shy about saying he believes Israel should give up part of its own capital to the PLO. This is another huge dividing line for Israelis.

Please pray for the people of Israel as we head to the polls today. Please pray that above all the Lord's will is done. As we read in Daniel 2, the Lord removes kings and establishes kings according to His sovereign will. Amen.

Joel C. Rosenberg is the author of numerous New York Times best-selling novels and nonfiction books, with nearly 3 million copies sold. He is also the founder of the Joshua Fund. His books are *The Last Jihad* (2002), *The Last Days* (2003), *The Ezekiel Option* (2005) and *The Copper Scroll* (2006).