

GOD TV Under Investigation After Launching Hebrew Channel in Israel

GOD TV received backlash after launching a Hebrew channel in Israel. Several public complaints were made that the channel was evangelistic, which is illegal in Israel. Israeli officials have launched an investigation into the matter.

"Today we made history! For the first time ever, a Messianic television channel is broadcasting the Gospel across Israel in the Hebrew language," GOD-TV said in a statement on its website to announce the new channel. "Shelanu translates to 'Ours' in Hebrew. We want every person in Israel to know, not a foreign Messiah, but a Jewish one! His name is Yeshua and He has not forgotten His people."

GOD TV is a Christian network that broadcasts in around 200 countries. Its Hebrew-language channel, Shelanu, began airing on the HOT cable network on April 29. According to Times of Israel, the Communications Ministry gave HOT a seven-year license to air Shelanu. But Communications Minister David Amsalem says this was an oversight and that he was not aware of Shelanu TV being given a license. He insists he will not allow a missionary channel to air in Israel by any means.

In Israel, it's illegal to evangelize to those under 18 years old without parents' consent, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

But Christian author and cultural commentator Michael Brown says that "as long as [GOD TV] does not target minors (under 18 years old, which they are certainly not doing), and as long as there is no coercion, such as offering money for conversion, then it is not illegal to preach the gospel and share the Good News of Yeshua in Israel. I believe GOD TV was

always clear in its purpose for being on the air in Israel, and I pray that the publicity will be used to draw more Hebrew speakers to their network. After all, the gospel is to the Jew first."

GOD TV CEO Ward Simpson confirmed that Shelanu TV is under investigation by local Israeli authorities. He says the investigation is the result of opposition to the channel's contents in regard to the rules and regulations in their license.

"GOD TV is committed to ensuring that the channel is in full compliance with these regulations, and we have a team of Israeli personnel on one of Israel's leading law firms advising us and representing us with this investigation," Simpson said. "GOD TV is confident that once these authorities abide by the standards they have set for themselves, this investigation will result with Shelanu TV continuing to broadcast Christian content. We have faith in the Israeli government and in their judicial system. Israel's democracy practices the freedom of religion and the freedom of worship, and our TV license is testament to this truth."

Simpson also says he recently received an email from a senior Israeli government official thanking him for GOD TV's support and for their pro-Israel platform.

"I would like to assure you that it is our full intention to abide by the rules and regulations surrounding our license and regret any comments that may have been made to give any appearance to the contrary," he said. "... Finally, to those of you who have been asking how you can help, we say this: Please do not let this investigation deter you from being a blessing to Israel. We must be her champion more than ever before. We must lock hands together and join with her in combatting anti-Semitism, BDS and every other evil aimed toward her. The Bible clearly says that whoever blesses Israel will be blessed, and whoever curses her will be cursed. We at GOD TV, we choose to

bless Israel.”