

# Family of Christian soldier who fell in Gaza asked to remove cross from his headstone

Bogdanovski's family immigrated to Israel from Ukraine in 2014, and David enlisted in the IDF and served in the engineering corps.

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IDF St.-Sgt. David Bogdanovski fell in battle in Khan Yunis in December 2023.  
(photo credit: IDF SPOKESPERSON'S UNIT)

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The [Defense Ministry](#) is attempting to reach an agreement with the family of St.-Sgt. David Bogdanovsky, who fell in battle in the south of the Gaza Strip in December, to remove a cross from his headstone.

"By law, it is not permissible to place a cross or any other religious marker on a military headstone," the Ministry said.

"This is especially important in the Haifa military cemetery, where fallen Jewish soldiers are also buried," the Ministry added, citing a ruling by the [IDF Chief Rabbi](#) that states the holiness of the Jewish cemetery is harmed by the cross.

The Ministry said it is working with the public committee for soldier memorial to reach an agreement with the family, "in light of requests by families whose loved ones are buried nearby who claim that the cross hurts their feelings and their ability to pray and say [the] Kadish [mourning prayer], and in light of the ruling of the IDF chief Rabbi."

"The Defense Ministry mourns with the family of fallen soldier David Bogdanovsky z"l and will continue to accompany the family and all bereaved families."



IDF operating in Khan Yunis during third reinvasion (credit: IDF SPOKESMAN'S UNIT)

"The Defense Ministry is working and will work sensitively with all sides, and we hope that we can reach an agreement and solution as soon as possible," it added.

## **Other graves had religious markers**

The family said that other graves in the cemetery have religious markers on them, N12 reported.

Bogdanovsky, a Christian resident of Haifa, made Aliyah in 2014 from Ukraine, according to Kan. He served in the [Combat Engineering Corps](#).

Earlier this month, Bogdanovsky's mother visited his grave and found that his headstone had been covered in black cloth while a ceremony was taking place for those killed on October 7, Ynet reported.

"I don't have words to describe the humiliation I felt," she told Ynet.

"I thought that my David, who gave his life to the country, who loved the country with all his heart for nine years, since his aliyah, who joined the IDF to defend me, his family, and all of us, is no different than any of the other guys, [and] is not a second-class citizen. I stood there and cried with anger, frustration, and not understanding," she said.

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