



Emes-and its chareidi version

ThinkingYid.com

There must be many thousands of Jews in the United States and elsewhere who get their news from chareidi websites. I confess to reading these websites myself throughout the day. About a week ago, a story of a "Kiddush Hashem" appeared on a well-known chareidi website. It concerned the Korean Ambassador to the United Nations and his daughter who worked for a well-known Agudah leader. This ambassador, so goes the story, was influenced by the courtesy shown by this Agudah leader to his daughter and the way he conducts his office to change a vote in the United Nations that benefited Israel. It was a wonderful and heart-warming story. Amazing proof that chareidi Jews are the cream of the crop, etc.

Except for one small detail- it seems the story never happened. It was what we call-an urban myth. So much so that the story was erased from the content of this Jewish website. In truth, many questions had arisen immediately as the story was published. And, until now, no corroboration has been given by any of the people mentioned in the story.

I don't think that this embarrassing turn of events will have much influence on resolving the burning questions of the day that face our people in Israel and elsewhere. It continues, however, a trend that has overtaken how news is presented in chareidi circles and published in like-minded publications. Just to mention one incident that happened a few years ago. Many of you may remember the photograph taken in the White House Situation Room as the raid to capture and kill Bin Laden was in progress. It showed President Obama and his national security team, including then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, listening intently to the wireless communications. It was widely disseminated throughout the whole world press and hundreds of millions saw this photograph. Except the readers of publications like Hamodia and Yated. Oh, they published the photo all right but they airbrushed Mrs. Hillary Clinton out of the picture, for reasons of "tznyus".

Now, if the editorial decision is not to show women's faces in their publications, I can live with that, although I find it a disturbing development. However, how can one, with a straight face, claim that this is the real photo of a real event? It is a doctored photo! It is patently false and it has no connection with the truth! Better not to print the photo at all, thereby being truthful, rather than printing a lie!

I am using this fairly insignificant episode to point out that, once someone engages in small lies, the wall of "emes" is breached and there is no turning back. Why stop at the photo of a woman? As a matter of fact, chareidi publications have not stopped at that. It has been widely documented that photographs of the fifties, showing R'Aaron Kotler zz'l together with R"Joseph Ber Soloveichik zz'l at charity dinners, was doctored to remove R'Joshe Ber zz'l from the photo *because he did not represent the values espoused by the*

chareidi groups. So, it was all right for R'Aaron zz'l to sit together with R"Joshe Ber zz'l at these functions but it was not good enough for the chareidi publications to acknowledge this fact! What a shameful turn of events!

There is a myriad of other examples of this corruption of the truth, thereby totally emasculating the meaning of "emes". It is not, at present, my purpose to document all of these examples. They extend far and wide, well into the outer reaches of such prestigious chareidi publishers as Artscroll and many chareidi weeklies. It is my purpose, however, to caution people that "Torah misinai" happened just once, "misinai" and never again. We should never accept, at face value, what is being fed to us by interested parties because everyone has an agenda, an agenda that is often contrary to the truth, the "emes".