



BEHIND THE PICTURE

CHILDREN ONLY - No Kuntzen! -

WHEN EASTERN PARKWAY SWELLED WITH SCHOOL KIDS

It is safe to say that nearly every Jew alive today has heard of the famous “dollars” lines. Many of them have even had the privilege of actually standing on one such line, whilst others have only heard stories repeated from mouth to mouth.¹

Beyond the universal lines, where anybody and everybody was welcome to participate, there were occasional *chalukos* which on the Rebbe’s behest were reserved for a specific crowd, be it shluchim, tankistin etc.

One such special distribution took place on the morrow of Yom Kippur 5752, known as *B’shem Hashem- g-tts’ nomen*.

A Tishrei that had already begun in all but an ordinary fashion and promised more and more exceptional *giluyim* with each passing day, took yet another interesting turn when on Thursday 11 Tishrei, the Rebbe made it known through his secretaries, that there would be a distribution of dollars after his return from the mikva and prior his departure to the ohel. But not a ‘simple’ distribution at that – rather this was



geared to children, under the ages of Bar and Bas Mitzvah and children only! The Rebbe even mentioned that adults shouldn’t make *kuntzen*, and try getting a dollar themselves.

The announcement of course caught chassidim by surprise, since it marked

a significant break from ‘protocol’, as on this day the Rebbe was poised only to go to the ohel. No soon was it announced and the news spread like wildfire; boys’ as well as girls’ schools scrambled to make arrangements so that their pupils be able to attend, mother with young babies,

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entire families from throughout Crown Heights and beyond - all determined not to let their little ones miss this amazing opportunity.

Light rain showers were falling on that morning, yet parents of all ages could be seen rushing to 770 with a child in each hand and often more walking beside them.

Quickly a long line formed in 770, so that before the Rebbe had even returned from the nearby mikva, hundreds of children were already gathered. Around two in the afternoon the windy lines began moving, while children passed in front of the Rebbe at the usual dollar- distribution place, in the hallway outside the Rebbe's room. Entire preschool classes, cheder classes with their melamdim, and mothers with their babies, and older children strode proudly by with their teachers, as the Rebbe handed each child a dollar bill, accompanied by a wish to 'A gut yohr'.

Over the two hours that followed, thousands of children had the zechus to receive a dollar from the Rebbe, while more arrived at 770 as time passed.

As the Rebbe made his exit from 770 onto the front pathway, another huge crowd had gathered around to receive a dollar from the Rebbe's holy hand. Blue construction boards stood on the right of the Rebbe, surrounding the expansion of 770 that was being done at the time.

Soon, as the line only grew, the Rebbe's shtender was brought so the Rebbe could lean on it. The Rebbe then again distributed dollars to all the children present; something that lasted for another few minutes, and finally departed for the ohel.

To the average passerby, it must have seemed like Eastern Parkway had suddenly turned into a playground as it swelled with children, each proudly holding onto his precious shlichus mitzvah! **D**

1. See "A Chassidisher Derher" issue 21 (98) p. 70.



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