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by Rabbi Yaakov Finestone

YES, YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

SPECIAL SUKKOS EDITION - KOHELES

It is very important to realize that each of us has a mission in this world that NO ONE ELSE can do! We should never feel that we are unimportant when compared to others. We all have different strengths and different weaknesses. However, we have exactly what we need to fulfill our task in this world. Even if someone is smarter or more capable than we are, he cannot accomplish the job in this world that was given only to us.

Furthermore, every single word and every single action that we do has an impact in the heavens. That impact, in turn, then affects us on earth, for good and for bad.

On Shabbos we read the Book of Koheles. The pasuk in Koheles (5:1) says that we should be careful what we say because *"Hashem is in heaven and you are on earth."* Rabbi Yaakov Kranz (1741–1804), known as the **Dubno Maggid** questions the wording of the pasuk. He says that the wording may defeat the purpose of the admonition to be careful what we say. We may feel that we don't have to be so careful as to what we say or do if Hashem is in heaven which is so far away from us. The Dubno Maggid says that the pasuk should have said, instead, that one should be careful because Hashem is everywhere, in heaven and on Earth and one can't hide anything from Hashem.

The **Dubno Maggid** answers his question with a beautiful parable.

An architect once received a detailed blueprint of the plans for a beautiful palace. It was drawn on a reduced scale and was written on a very small piece of parchment. The architect asked his assistant to carefully copy the blueprint and draw

"Do not be rash with your mouth and let not your heart be quick to say a word before Hashem. For Hashem is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore, your words should be few." (Koheles 5:1)

it on a larger scale. The assistant did as he was told. Very carefully and painstakingly the assistant copied the blueprint. Feeling proud of his efforts, the assistant presented his work to the chief architect.

Her assistant was waiting to be praised for his excellent work. Instead, the chief architect scolded him for doing a poor job. He told the assistant that he was careless as he had neglected to copy a very small dot that was on the original drawing. The assistant was very upset and asked the chief architect why he was so angry about one little dot. The chief architect explained that the original blueprint was drawn on a greatly reduced scale. The tiny dot that the assistant left out represented one of the pillars that would be supporting the entire upper floor of the palace. If that pillar was left out, then the entire palace would collapse! Although it appeared as if it was something that was insignificant, it was vital to the building.

Similarly, Man was made in the image of Hashem. Every person is a small-scale representation of a pillar of the Universe. If one person would be omitted, then the Divinely built structure of the Universe would collapse. Every one of us is vital to the Divine scheme, even more than we realize!!

One may not realize the importance of his words and his deeds. Measured by human standards, they may not be overly significant. But, as it says in Koheles, *"Hashem is in heaven and you are on earth."* There is a vast difference between man's standards and Hashem's standards which are

beyond our comprehension. What seems to be small and insignificant in our eyes can be very important in Hashem's eyes. Our words or thoughtless acts may be long forgotten, but the consequences of their impact in the heavens have far-reaching implications!

We must always remember how truly special each of us is! All our words and actions, whether they seem to be important or insignificant, impact the heavens! On the heavenly scale our actions are greatly magnified. Let's grab the opportunity to do those "small" mitzvos and take the opportunity to say a few nice words to make someone feel good.

(based on the Maggid of Dubno and His Parables by Benno Heinemann)

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Rabbi Yaakov Finestone is the director of JEP Queens. For almost 50 years JEP Queens has been in the forefront of kiruv. JEP has changed the lives of thousands of Jewish children enrolled in public schools and kiruv schools. Many are shomrei Torah and mitzvos today because of JEP.

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