He shall not place oil on it nor shall he place frankincense on it, for it's a sin-offering. (5:11)

The plain meal offering for a *chatas*, sin (offering), was brought for specific sins. This *korban* is part of the *Korban Oleh v'yoreid*, variable sin-offering, class, which is a dispensation to provide one who is poor the opportunity to atone for his sin with a *korban*. The variable *korban* is comprised of either a sheep or a goat, two turtledoves or two young doves, or, in the event that one has no funds, a tenth of an *eiphah* of flour. While oil and frankincense are put on all other meal offerings, the *chatas* receives no embellishment of oil or frankincense, since it is brought to atone for a sin.

Chazal (*Talmud Menachos* 59b) note a *halachic* difference between oil and frankincense with regard to the prohibition against including them in the meal offering. Whereas a single drop of oil invalidates the *korban*, a minimum of a *kazayis* (olive size) is required to invalidate the *korban*. Why is oil different than frankincense? Perhaps, since the oil is mixed in, it becomes an intrinsic part of the *korban*. In such a case, anything – even the bare minimum -- invalidates the offering. Frankincense is used to enhance/adorn/ add to the external *korban*. This requires a greater amount of embellishment than the bare minimum.

Chazal derive the variance in *halachah* from the disparate words which the Torah uses to signify supplementing a *korban* with either of these two products. Concerning oil, the Torah writes *yasim*, which means to place even a *mashehu*, the most insignificant amount. Regarding the frankincense, the Torah uses the word *v'yitein*, and give, which means a *nesinah chashuvah*, significant placement, equivalent (according to *Chazal*) to the size of an olive.

Horav Avraham Pam, zl (*Messages from Rav Pam*/Rabbi Sholom Smith), quotes the *Maharil Diskin* (commentary to *Parashas Eikev*), who applies *Chazal's* semantic difference (between *simah* and *nesinah*) in explaining a *pasuk* in *Devarim* 7:15. *V'heisir Hashem mimcha kol choli… lo yesimam bach u'nesanam b'chol sonecha*, "Hashem will remove from you all illness… He will not place them upon you, but He will put them upon all your foes." Here, too, the *pasuk* uses two words that seem synonymous with one another, but are actually different. *Yesimam* and *u'nesanam* are not the same. Wherein lies their difference?

Maharil Diskin applies the aforementioned distinction related to *Korban Chatas, Oleh v'yoreid. Yesimam* refers to an insignificant, minute amount, while *u'nesanam* appertains to a full measure. Hashem ensures *Klal Yisrael* that if they maintain their fidelity to Him, if they observe and adhere to His *mitzvos; lo yesimam* – He will not place upon them even the slightest vestige of illness and will, instead, put them with a full measure on our enemies. This is how Hashem blesses.

With this idea to guide us, perhaps we might adapt it to the blessing we give our children: *Yesimcha Elokim k'Efraim u'k'Menashe, yesimeichElokim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel v'Leah*. We ask Hashem to bless our children using the word *yasim*, which, as we just explained, is used in

connection with a minute amount. Why? One would think that we want Hashem to bless our children with a full dose of blessing. Why settle for anything less? I think the message that we should derive from here is that blessing plays a critical role in starting the child off toward a positive goal. We want our children to aspire to such greatness, as evinced by these giants -- both men and women -- of our nation. If the children do not put forth their own effort toward the realization of their blessings, it will be short-lived at best. Blessings are wonderful, but we must do our part. We must nurture our children, encourage, guide, discipline and inspire. They must do their "thing" to work for the lofty goals represented by our Torah giants. This, together with the blessings, will engender much Torah *nachas*, satisfaction, from our children.