אמן יהי רצון, Amen Yehi Ratson

**Introduction:** This is a short and beautiful poem for the bridegroom on his wedding day, blessing the newlyweds and praying for their success. The poet employs biblical metaphors from the Song of Songs and from the descriptions of the priestly clothing. **Category:** Zemirot (Songs)  
  
**Genre:** Zemer for a Wedding  
  
**Occasion:** Weddings  
  
**Name:** אמן יהי רצון, Amen Yehi Ratson  
  
**Composer**: Aharon ben Yosef  
  
**Location:** Constantinople, Byzantine Empire

**Date:** c. 1250–1320  
  
**Acrostic:** אהרן “Aharon”  
  
**Source:** Vilna Siddur, Volume 4, page 141  
  
**Visual Representation of Meter:** – – v – – – / – – v – –   
  
**Description of Meter:** Each line consists of two half-lines: the first half-line contains two full vowels, followed by a vocal sheva and a full vowel, followed by two more full vowels. The second half-line consists of two full vowels, followed by a vocal sheva and a full vowel, followed by one more full vowel.  
  
**Davidson number:** א 5725  
  
**Karaite origin:** Yes (?)

**About the author:** Based on available information, we believe this poem was written by the 12th century Karaite Sage Aharon ben Yosef, who lived in Constantinople in the Byzantine Empire. He was among the first Karaite scholars to arrange a compendium of liturgical texts that eventually became an authoritative version of the siddur, or prayerbook, for all Karaite communities. Aharon introduced several Sephardic rabbinic poems into the Karaite liturgy and composed new poems skillfully emulating their form and style. Many of his liturgical poems are published in Karaite prayerbooks, where he is referred to by the simple honorific: *Ha-rav*, “the master,” often without his name, since he was so well known.

Aharon was a prominent biblical scholar and well versed in medieval Jewish philosophy. His most influential work was *Sefer Ha-mivḥar* (“The Choice Book,” Eupatoria, 1835), a commentary on the Torah. Eminent rabbinic exegetes such as Rashi and Abraham ibn Ezra deeply influenced Aharon’s concise style. *Sefer Ha-mivḥar* became one of the most popular and treasured works of Karaite exegesis, and later, several Karaite scholars added new explanations (supercommentaries) to it. Aharon’s other works include *Mivḥar Yesharim* (“The Choice of the Righteous”), a commentary on the Former Prophets and Isaiah, and commentaries on the Psalms and the Book of Job.

**Sources**: *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (2nd ed., 2007), *The* *Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* (2011).

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| Amen yehi ratson leḳonecha  Yaḡdil veḡam yarbé sesonecha | אָ֒מֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן לְקוֹנֶךָ   יַגְדִּיל וְגַם יַרְבֶּה שְׂשׂוֹנֶךָ: |
| Amen, may the will of your Creator truly be fulfilled.  May He multiply and increase your happiness. | |
| Amen yehi ratson leḳonecha  Yaḡdil veḡam yarbé sesonecha | אָמֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן לְקוֹנֶךָ   יַגְדִּיל וְגַם יַרְבֶּה שְׂשׂוֹנֶךָ: |
| Amen, may the will of your Creator truly be fulfilled.  May He multiply and increase your happiness. | |
| Hattom vehaḥochma levushecha  Haḥen vehammisra ashishecha  Ashré anashecha mesharetecha  Shoḳedim veḡam ‘omedim lefanecha | הַ֒תּוֹם וְהַחָכְמָה לְבוּשֶׁךָ  הַחֵן וְהַמִּשְׂרָה אֲשִׁישֶׁךָ  אַשְׁרֵי אֲנָשֶׁיךָ מְשָׁרְתֶיךָ שֹׁקְדִים וְגַם עוֹמְדִים לְפָנֶיךָ: |
| You are clothed with honesty and wisdom.  Grace and dominion are your delicacies.  Happy are your men and servants,  constantly standing before you. | |
| Amen yehi ratson leḳonecha  Yaḡdil veḡam yarbé sesonecha | אָמֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן לְקוֹנֶךָ   יַגְדִּיל וְגַם יַרְבֶּה שְׂשׂוֹנֶךָ: |
| Amen, may the will of your Creator truly be fulfilled.  May He multiply and increase your happiness. | |
| Reḳem bedolaḥé leshamecha  Rafud bemerḳaḥé vesamecha  Yadecha halo timtsa leḳamecha  Tsarim hachi timshol yeminecha | רֶ֒קֶם בְּדוֹלָחֵי לְשָׁמֶיךָ רָפוּד בְּמֶרְקָחֵי בְשָׂמֶיךָ  יָדְךָ הֲלֹא תִמְצָא לְקָמֶיךָ צָרִים הֲכִי תִּמְשׁוֹל יְמִינֶךָ: |
| Your embroidered crystal opals are enveloped in your perfumed fragrance.  Surely, your hand will dominate your foes;  Your right hand will justly rule the enemies. | |
| Amen yehi ratson leḳonecha  Yaḡdil veḡam yarbé sesonecha | אָמֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן לְקוֹנֶךָ   יַגְדִּיל וְגַם יַרְבֶּה שְׂשׂוֹנֶךָ: |
| Amen, may the will of your Creator truly be fulfilled.  May He multiply and increase your happiness. | |

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| Nafshi benozelé ḥen ḥasadecha  Tashbets nedavot ḥen efodecha  Ḥasheḳa lehitlonen besodecha  Tishkon betsel taḥat sheronecha | נַ֒פְשִׁי בְּנֹזְלֵי חֵן חֲסָדֶיךָ תַּשְׁבֵּץ נְדָבוֹת חֵן אֱפוֹדֶךָ  חָשְׁקָה לְהִתְלוֹנֵן בְּסוֹדֶךָ תִּשְׁכֹּן בְּצֵל תַּחַת שְׁרוֹנֶךָ: |
| My soul in the flow of your splendid kindness,  in the checkered garment of your generosity, the majesty of your ephod,  my soul yearns to dwell within your company  and reside under the shade of your Sharon. | |
| Amen yehi ratson leḳonecha  Yaḡdil veḡam yarbé sesonecha | אָמֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן לְקוֹנֶךָ   יַגְדִּיל וְגַם יַרְבֶּה שְׂשׂוֹנֶךָ: |
| Amen, may the will of your Creator truly be fulfilled.  May He multiply and increase your happiness. | |
| Ḥai el asher tikken yesod kullam  Yavi veyamecha gevir ne‘lam  Kiso tehé tamid ‘adé ‘olam  Tizké re’ot banim levanecha | חַי אֵל אֲשֶׁר תִּכֵּן יְסוֹד כֻּלָּם יָבִיא בְיָמֶיךָ גְּבִיר נֶעְלָם  כִּסְאוֹ תְהֵא תָּמִיד עֲדֵי עוֹלָם  תִּזְכֶּה רְאוֹת בָּנִים לְבָנֶיךָ: |
| By God, who has designed the foundation for everything!  May He bring the concealed champion in your days.  May his Throne reign eternal.  May you [live to] see your children’s children! | |
| Amen yehi ratson leḳonecha  Yaḡdil veḡam yarbé sesonecha | אָמֵן יְהִי רָצוֹן לְקוֹנֶךָ   יַגְדִּיל וְגַם יַרְבֶּה שְׂשׂוֹנֶךָ: |
| Amen, may the will of your Creator truly be fulfilled.  May He multiply and increase your happiness. | |
| Kakkatuv: Uré vanim levanecha, shalom ‘al yisra’el. | כַּכָּתוּב: וּרְאֵֽה־בָנִ֥ים לְבָנֶ֑יךָ שָׁ֝ל֗וֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵֽל:  (תהלים קכח, ו) |
| As it is written: May you live to see your children’s children. Let there be peace on Israel  (Ps. 128:6). | |