

Piyut: Yismach Hatani

Name _____

Date _____

Yismach Hatani ("May my groom rejoice") is a song of blessing for a groom, sung when he is called up to the Torah around his wedding and at wedding celebrations in many Sephardic and Middle Eastern Jewish communities. Its author is unknown. In 2016 the singer Sarit Hadad recorded it for the Israeli film *Yismach Hatani*, known in English as *The Women's Balcony*.

English	Transliteration	Hebrew
Refrain		
May my groom rejoice among my faithful people;	<i>Yismach chatani bik'hal emunai,</i>	יִשְׁמַח חַתָּנִי בְּקֹהֶל אֱמוּנָי
may he receive a blessing from the Lord.	<i>yisa v'rakhah me'et Adonai.</i>	יֵשָׂא בְּרָכָה מֵאֵת יי
Verse 1		
May the Almighty fulfill his heart's desire;	<i>Shaddai y'malei ta'avat libo,</i>	שְׁדֵי יִמְלֵא תַאֲוַת לִבּוֹ
may a shield and protection surround him;	<i>magen v'tzinah yihyeh s'vivo,</i>	מָגֵן וְצִנָּה יִהְיֶה סְבִיבּוֹ
may He give him light and make his path straight,	<i>v'ya'er oto vi'yasher n'tivo,</i>	וַיֵּאֵר אוֹתוֹ וַיַּשֵּׁר נְתִיבּוֹ
to follow and keep the ways of the Lord.	<i>ligmor v'lishmor darkhei Adonai.</i>	לְגַמֹּר וּלְשַׁמֵּר דְּרָכֵי יי
Verse 2		
Upon his head may He command great blessings;	<i>L'rosho y'tzaveh b'rakhot atzumot,</i>	לְרֹאשׁוֹ יִצְוֶה בְּרָכוֹת עֲצוּמוֹת
may he travel always on a river of peace;	<i>v'yisa b'khol et k'nahar sh'lomot,</i>	וַיֵּסַע בְּכָל עֵת כְּנָהָר שְׁלוֹמוֹת
may he come with song, bearing sheaves of grain,	<i>bo yavo v'rinah nose alumot,</i>	בֹּא יָבֵא בְּרִנָּה נוֹשֵׂא אֲלָמוֹת
and live to see the salvation of the Lord.	<i>yizkeh v'yir'eh y'shu'at Adonai.</i>	יִזְכֶּה וַיֵּרְאֶה יְשׁוּעַת יי

Translation by JIMENA. Line 9 echoes Psalm 126:6.

What do you think?

1 What blessings does the poem give the groom? List two.

2 Which image do you find most beautiful or surprising? Why?

Let's listen and compare

Hibbat HaPiyut ensemble; Sarit Hadad

	Traditional ensemble	Sarit Hadad
Performers		
Instruments		
Tempo (fast, slow, changing)		
Voice and singing style		
Mood		
Audience and purpose		

3 How is Sarit Hadad's version different from the traditional one? What stays the same?

4 Why do you think a pop star recorded a centuries old wedding blessing for a film?

5 How does the music make you feel?

6 Exit question: Why do communities keep old songs alive, and how do they make them new?

Written by JIMENA.