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Full Months and Deficient Ones

The Gemora notes that Shmuel as well holds like Rav Huna (*who maintains that eight full months may be arranged*), for Shmuel said: The lunar year consists of no less than three hundred and fifty-two days, nor of more than three hundred and fifty-six days. How is that? If the two (*which are normally deficient, such as Mar-Cheshvan and Iyar*) are made to be full, there are (*three hundred and fifty*) six; if the two (*which are normally full, such as Kislev and Sivan*) are made to be deficient, there are (*three hundred and fifty*) two; if one is full and one deficient, there are (*three hundred and fifty*) four.

The Gemora asks on them (*Rav Huna and Shmuel*) from a *braisa*: If someone says he will be a *nazir* like the amount of days in a solar year, he must be a *nazir* for three hundred and sixty-five days, according to the amount of days in a solar year; if someone says he will be a *nazir* like the amount of days in a lunar year, he must be a *nazir* for three hundred and fifty-four days, according to the amount of days in a lunar year. Now, if it were to be true (*that there can be eight full months*), at times you would find a year consisting of three hundred and fifty-six days!?

The Gemora answers: With regard to vows, we go after the normal language of people and after the majority of years.

The Gemora notes that Rebbe as well holds like Rav Huna (*who maintains that eight full months may be arranged*), for it was taught in a *braisa*: It once happened that Rebbe arranged for nine deficient months (*in one year*), and the new moon of *Tishrei* was still seen in its proper time (*on Rosh Hashanah*)! Rebbe was amazed and said: We have arranged nine deficient months and yet the new moon of *Tishrei* was still seen in its proper time!

Rabbi Shimon the son of Rebbe said to him: Perhaps it (*last year*) was a leap year, and the prolongation period of the year (*the extra month of Adar*) was thirty days, and last year we made two full months (*more than normal – a total of eight full months for the year*). Deduct the three deficient months (*from this year*) against the three full months (*of last year*), and it (*the new moon of Tishrei*) will emerge in its proper place. Rebbe answered him: Light of Israel! That is the way it was! [We see that Rebbe holds that a year may contain eight full months – like Rav Huna.] (9b – 10a)

Mishna

They blew never less than twenty-one blasts (*from the trumpets*) in the Temple (*three were sounded on opening the Courtyard gates in the morning, nine when offering the morning tamid, nine when offering the afternoon tamid; while the tamid wine libations were being poured on the Altar*) and never more than forty-eight (*on a Friday that fell during Sukkos, for the daily twenty-one blasts were sounded, plus twelve blasts during the nisuch hamayim (water libation) ceremony, nine by the mussaf offerings, three to warn the people to cease work, and three (as every Friday) to separate the holy from the mundane*).

They played never less than two *nevalim* (*a musical instrument that was played while the Levi'im sang in the Temple*) or more than six. They played never less than two flutes or more than twelve.

There were twelve days during the year when flutes were played before the Altar: at the slaughtering of the first *Pesach* sacrifice, at the slaughtering of the second *Pesach* sacrifice, on the first *Yom Tov of Pesach*, on *Shavuos*, and on the eight days of *Sukkos* and *Shemini Atzeres*.

They did not play on a flute of copper but on a reed pipe, because its sound is sweeter. It ended with a solo flute, for it makes a pleasant finale.

Rabbi Meir maintains that slaves of the *Kohanim* played the musical instruments. Rabbi Yosi holds that they were family members of Beis HaPegarim and Beis Tzippraya from Emaum, who would marry into *Kehunah* (*for they were Israelites with pure lineage, and the Kohanim didn't even need to investigate*). Rabbi Chanina ben Antignos maintains that the *Levi'im* themselves played the musical instruments. (10a)

Trumpet Blasts in the Temple

The *Gemora* notes that our *Mishna* does not follow the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah, for it was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Yehudah said: They blew never less than seven blasts, and never more than sixteen.

The *Gemora* explains the principle that they are disputing: Rabbi Yehudah says: *Teki'ah* (*a long blast*), *teru'ah* (*short blasts*), *teki'ah* are regarded as one sound, whereas the Sages hold that *teki'ah* is a separate sound, *teru'ah* is a separate sound, and so is the last *teki'ah* (*so that which the Sages says is twenty-one, R' Yehudah counts as seven, for each set of three is reckoned as one*).

The *Gemora* cites the Scriptural sources for each of their respective opinions.

The *Gemora* asks: According to whom will be the following teaching of Rav Kahana that there may be no pause whatsoever between a *teki'ah* and a *teru'ah*?

The *Gemora* answers: It is following Rabbi Yehudah (*who maintains that the three sounds comprise a single mitzvah*).

The *Gemora* asks: But is this not obvious?

The *Gemora* answers: You might have thought that it can be in accordance even with the Sages (*for they hold only that there should not be a long pause between the sounds*), and it is taught like this only to exclude the view of Rabbi Yochanan, who ruled that if one hears nine sounds of the *shofar* at nine different hours of the day (*on Rosh Hashanah*), he has fulfilled his obligation; therefore we are informed that this is not so. (10a)

Hallel

The *Mishna* had stated that there were twelve days during the year when flutes were played before the Altar.

The *Gemora* asks: Why just on these days?

The *Gemora* answers: It is because on these days an individual completes the (*entire*) *Hallel* on them, for Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yehotzadak: Eighteen times during the year an individual recites the entire *Hallel*, and they are: On the eight days of *Sukkos*, on the eight days of *Chanukah*, on the first day of *Pesach* and on the first day of *Shavuos*. While in exile, however, one recites it twenty-one times during the year, namely: On the nine days of *Sukkos*, on the eight days of *Chanukah*, on the first two days of *Pesach* and on the two days of *Shavuos*.

The *Gemora* asks: Why is the entire *Hallel* recited on the days of *Sukkos*, but not on *Pesach*?

The *Gemora* answers: The days of *Sukkos* are differentiated from one another in respect of their sacrifices (*for each day, a different amount of sacrifices were offered up – each day was one less than the previous one*), whereas the days of *Pesach* are not differentiated from one another in respect of their sacrifices.

The *Gemora* asks: Let it then be recited on *Shabbos*, which is different (*from the rest of the week*) regarding its sacrifices (*for there is a mussaf offering on Shabbos*)?

The *Gemora* answers: *Shabbos* is not called a festival (*and Hallel is only recited on those days referred to as a festival*).

The *Gemora* asks: But what of *Rosh Chodesh*, which is called a festival, let the complete *Hallel* be recited on it?

The *Gemora* answers: *Rosh Chodesh* is not sanctified regarding the prohibition of labor, as it is written: *The song shall be for you like the night when the festival becomes sanctified*. We learn from here that only the night sanctified (*with respect to the prohibition of labor*) towards a festival requires song, but the night which is not sanctified towards a festival does not require song.

The *Gemora* asks: Then let the *Hallel* be recited on *Rosh Hashanah* and on *Yom Kippur*, both of which are called a festival and are sanctified by the prohibition of labor?

The *Gemora* answers: It is not recited then on account of that which Rabbi Avahu said, for Rabbi Avahu said that the Heavenly angels asked the Holy One, Blessed be He, "Master of the Universe, what is the reason that the Jewish people do not sing to You on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*?" Hashem responded (*by asking rhetorically*), "Is it possible that when the King is sitting on the Seat of Judgment and the Books of Life and Death are opened before Him, that the Jews should recite song at that time!?"

The *Gemora* asks: But there is *Chanukah*, on which neither one nor the other applies (*for it does not have any offerings, nor is it called a festival, nor is it forbidden for labor*) and the *Hallel* is recited?

The *Gemora* answers: That is due to the miracle.

The *Gemora* asks: Why then don't we recite *Hallel* on *Purim*?

Rabbi Yitzchak answers: We do not recite *Hallel* on a miracle that occurred outside of *Eretz Yisroel*.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak asks: If so, why did they sing when they were leaving Egypt?

The *Gemora* answers: Before they entered *Eretz Yisroel*, *Hallel* could be recited on miracles outside *Eretz Yisroel*; it was only after they entered *Eretz Yisroel* that *Hallel* could only be recited on miracles that occurred inside of *Eretz Yisroel*.

Rav Nachman answers (*the question regarding Hallel on Purim*): The reading of the *Megillah* is in itself *Hallel* (*and replaces the obligation to recite Hallel*).

Rava suggests that there is no obligation to recite *Hallel* on the miracle of *Purim* because we are still servants of Achashverosh.

The *Gemora* concludes that once they were sent into exile, *Hallel* (*which according to Rav Nachman is the reading of the Megillah*) can be recited even on a miracle that transpired outside of *Eretz Yisroel*. (10a – 10b)

Musical Instruments in the Temple

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: There was a flute in the Temple which was smooth and thin, made of reed, and it was from the days of Moshe. The king commanded to cover it with gold, whereupon its sound was no more pleasant. They removed its cover, and its sound was pleasant again as before.

There were cymbals in the Temple made of copper, and its sound was pleasant; then it became damaged. The Sages sent for craftsmen from Alexandria of Egypt, and they repaired it, but its sound was not pleasant any more. They removed the repair and its sound became as pleasant as it was before.

A copper mortar was in the Temple from the days of Moshe, and it would be used to prepare the spices. When it became damaged, the Sages sent for craftsmen from Alexandria of Egypt who repaired it, but it would not prepare the spices as well as it used to. They removed the repair, and it would prepare the spices well again as before.

There were two vessels (*the mortar and the cymbals*) left over from the first Temple, and after they had been damaged there was no repair for them.

The *braisa* continues: Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel taught: The *Shiloach* (which was a water spring near Yerushalayim) would issue water the size of an *issar* (a small coin). The king commanded and it was widened so that its waters be increased, but the waters diminished. They narrowed it again, and it issued water as before.

Rava bar Shila said in the name of Rav Masnah in the name of Shmuel: There was a shovel in the Temple; it had ten holes, each of which produced ten different kinds of sounds (*through a pipe with ten holes*), with the result that the entire shovel emitted one hundred kinds of sounds.

A *Tanna* taught: It was one cubit long, one cubit high, from it protruded a handle, which had ten holes. Each of them produced one hundred kinds of sounds, resulting that the entire shovel emitted a thousand kinds of sounds.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: To remember whose teaching it is, the mnemonic is that the *braisa* exaggerates. (10b – 11a)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Reciting a Brachah on Hallel of Rosh Chodesh

The *Gemora* elsewhere cites an incident where Rav visited Bavel and observed that the people were reciting *Hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh*. He thought about stopping them since it is only voluntary to recite *Hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh*. Once he realized that they were skipping certain segments, he said that it is apparent that they are perpetuating their fathers' custom.

Tosfos states that from this incident, there is proof that a *brachah* is recited even when the full *Hallel* is not recited for otherwise, why would Rav have considered stopping them; they

weren't doing anything wrong. Rabbeinu Tam concludes that a *brachah* is recited on half-*Hallel*. The Rambam disagrees and maintains that a *brachah* is not recited on a custom.

Tosfos here states that perhaps *Hallel* is not recited at all on *Rosh Chodesh* since it is understood from the *Gemora* that *Hallel* is only recited on a day that it is prohibited from working. *Rosh Chodesh* is referred to as a "Moed," but one is permitted to work.

Tosfos concludes that half-*Hallel* is recited on *Rosh Chodesh* with a *brachah* beforehand even though the recitation of *Hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh* is merely a custom. Tosfos in *Brachos* (14b) cites the opinion of the *Machzor Vitri* that a *brachah* is not recited on a custom.

The *Tur* (O"C 422) writes that there are several customs regarding the recitation of *Hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh*. Some rule that a private individual should not recite *Hallel* at all but the public should recite *Hallel* and make a *brachah* before and after. Some maintain that there is no distinction between an individual and the community and they all recite *Hallel* without a *brachah*. Rabbeinu Tam holds that everyone recites *Hallel* with a *brachah*.

Most *Rishonim* maintain that *Hallel* is recited with a *brachah*, however different reasons are offered as to why a *brachah* is recited. Rabbeinu Tam states that a *brachah* is recited on all customs. Tosfos Rid maintains that a *brachah* will not be recited on a regular custom but *Hallel* is different; since the primary recitation of *Hallel* is compulsory, *Hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh* (although it's only customary) is recited with a *brachah*. Rabbeinu Manoach states that reciting *Hallel* on *Rosh Chodesh* is more than a custom; it is a *takana* (establishment) and therefore necessitates a *brachah*. Tosfos HaRosh in *Sukkah* explains that since *Hallel* is important, it is akin to reading from the Torah and a *brachah* should be recited.

Hallel on Chanukah is a Torah Requirement

The *Gemora* in *Taanis* inquires as to why the *Mishna* did not mention that there was no *ma'amad* on the first of Nissan for they recited *Hallel* and there was a *Mussaf* sacrifice and a wood offering. Rava answers that this *Mishna* is an indicator that the *Hallel* which is sung on *Rosh Chodesh* is not based upon a biblical ordinance and therefore the *ma'amad* is not suspended. This is based upon the words of Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yehotzadak who states: "Eighteen times during the year an individual may recite the whole *Hallel*, and they are: On the eight days of *Sukkos*, on the eight days of *Chanukah*, on the first day of *Pesach* and on the first day of *Shavuos*. While in exile, however, one may recite it twenty-one times during the year, namely: On the nine days of *Sukkos*, on the eight days of *Chanukah*, on the first two days of *Pesach* and on the two days of *Shavuos*." *Rosh Chodesh* is not mentioned here, indicating that it is only a custom and therefore it will not suspend the *ma'amad*.

Rashi states that the obligation to recite *Hallel* on *Chanukah* is similar to a Biblical obligation since it was established in accordance with the practice instituted by the prophets of reciting *Hallel* whenever the Jewish people are saved from a dangerous situation.

Although we generally relate to the holiday *Chanukah* as being of Rabbinic origin, Chasam Sofer explains that the obligation to establish a festival on the day on which a miracle occurred is, in fact, a Torah requirement. Chasam Sofer writes, "Therefore observing the days of Purim and *Chanukah* are indeed a Torah obligation and one who fails to do so is nullifying a positive precept in the Torah." It is a long-standing Jewish custom to hold celebratory meals during *Chanukah* to provide an opportunity to sing and recite praises to Hashem for the miracles He performed on our behalf. Doing so, explains the Chasam Sofer, is the fulfillment of a positive Torah commandment.

Song on Rosh Hashanah

The *Gemora* infers from the *Mishna* that *Hallel* is not recited on *Rosh Hashanah*. Rav Avahu explains that the Heavenly angels

asked Hashem as to the reason that Klal Yisroel does not sing to You on *Rosh Hashanah* and Yom Kippur. Hashem responded by asking rhetorically, is it possible that when the King is sitting on the Seat of Judgment and the books of life and death are opened before Him, that Klal Yisroel should recite song at that time.

The Tur (581) writes that one should bathe himself and take a haircut before *Rosh Hashanah* based on the Medrash which states that one should eat, drink and rejoice on *Rosh Hashanah* since he knows that Hashem will perform a miracle for him.

The Yom Teruah asks from our *Gemora* which states that song is not recited on *Rosh Hashanah*. He answers that each individual can rejoice since he is confident that Hashem will judge him favorably however there will be those in the world that will be sentenced for death and because of them, *Hallel* is not recited on *Rosh Hashanah*.

The Aruch Lener comments that the Heavenly angels did not inquire about themselves since they understand that they should not sing when there are people being inscribed for death. They were only asking in regards to Klal Yisroel, that they should recite *Hallel* since they should be secure that they will be inscribed for a good year. Hashem answers that nevertheless, it would be inappropriate for them to recite *Hallel* cheerfully while they are being judged.

He writes further that the Heavenly angels were asking about Klal Yisroel reciting *Hallel* since they do not have permission to sing praise to Hashem unless Klal Yisroel sings first, so in essence they were asking regarding themselves.

The assumption of the Aruch Lener that the heavenly angels refrain from singing on *Rosh Hashanah* is not universally accepted. Tosfos here writes explicitly that the Heavenly angels do sing on *Rosh Hashanah*. His proof is from our *Gemora* that the angels do not inquire about themselves. It is evident that they do sing and their question is only regarding Klal Yisroel.

Reb Yonason Eibshitz in *Yaaros Devash* (14) explains that the Heavenly angels claimed that while they understand why Klal Yisroel does not recite *Hallel* on *Rosh Hashanah* but they should be able to sing since there is no book of death opened for them. The answer given to them is that there is a judgment for them as well (like it is said in the tefillah of u'nesaneh tokef). The book of life is referring to the judgment for the angels since they live forever. The book of death is opened for people since they can be inscribed to die. This is the reason why the angels and Klal Yisroel refrain from singing on *Rosh Hashanah*.

The Maharsha asks why we are able to recite 'az yashir' on *Rosh Hashanah*. He answers that this is only relating what Moshe and Klal Yisroel sang when they crossed over the sea.

It is cited in the name of Reb Chaim Brisker that it is permitted to recite the *shir shel yom* on *Rosh Hashanah* since that does not require complete happiness when it is being recited. *Hallel* can only be recited if one is in a state of complete happiness and that is not possible on *Rosh Hashanah*.

Megillah and Hallel

There is a dispute cited in the *Gemora* regarding the reason that *Hallel* is not recited on Purim. One reason offered is that once Klal Yisroel entered Eretz Yisroel, we do not recite *Hallel* on a miracle that occurred outside of Eretz Yisroel. This reason is challenged because it can be said that once they were sent into exile, *Hallel* can be recited even on a miracle that transpired in the Diaspora. Rav Nachman states that the reading of the *Megillah* replaces the obligation to recite *Hallel*. Rava explains that there is no obligation to recite *Hallel* on the miracle of Purim because we are still servants of Achashverosh.

Shulchan Aruch (O"C 693:3) rules that *Hallel* is not recited on Purim. The *Mishna Berura* (7) cites Rava's explanation that it was not regarded as a complete redemption since we are still servants of Achashverosh.

The Rambam in *Hilchos Chanukah* (3:6) writes that the sages did not establish the obligation to recite *Hallel* on Purim because

the reading of the *Megillah* is regarded as if he would be reciting *Hallel*.

The Meiri writes that if one does not have an accessible *Megillah*, he has an obligation to recite *Hallel*. The Poskim dispute if this *Hallel* should be recited with a *brachah* or without.

The Chasam Sofer (O"C 192) asks the following question on this Meiri. If Purim falls out on a Friday, the cities that are surrounded by a wall will also read the *Megillah* on Friday. Shouldn't they recite *Hallel* on Shabbos since that is their actual day of Purim? The Pri Megadim does state that this indeed would be the *halachah*.

In the sefer *Birchas Refoel* (14), he explains that when the *Gemora* states that "reading the *Megillah* is regarded as reciting *Hallel*" it does not mean that reading the *Megillah* is a fulfillment of the obligation of reciting *Hallel*; rather the meaning is that one is not obligated to recite *Hallel* after the miracle of Purim has already been publicized. Once the *Megillah* was read, there is no necessity or reason to recite *Hallel*. According to this, there would not be any necessity to recite *Hallel* on Shabbos after the *Megillah* was read the day before.

Did the flute in the Temple "strike" or "play"?

Hoping for the complete Redemption and the erection of the *Beis Hamikdash* includes the hope for the great experience of hearing and seeing the Leviim's song (see *Musaf* prayer of *Rosh Chodesh*). The Remo writes (*Toras Chatas*, II, Ch. 38) that the Leviim played instruments and sang in the Temple according to a sublime musical wisdom that has become lost. He adds that the Leviim's song corresponded to the song of Creation, the sun, the moon and all the celestial bodies as they played each instrument according to its influence on high. The author of *Ishei Yisrael* details (ibid) the instruments in use in the Temple and mentioned in the last chapter of *Tehilim*: *shofar*, *neivel*, *kinor*, *tof*, *machol*, etc. – and explains the connection between

each instrument and the planet with which it corresponded. In this article we shall address the flute (*chalil*).

First we present a few things which demand explanation and which all lead to a most interesting conclusion. Our *Mishnah* says "...and on 12 days in the year the flute strikes before the altar: at the slaughtering of the first Pesach and the slaughtering of the second Pesach and on the first Yomtov of Pesach and on 'Atzeres (*Shavuos*) and on the eight days of *Sukkos*." Rambam (*Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* 3:6) rules likewise and explains that even if these 12 days fell on Shabbos, they would play the flute because it is part of the service of the sacrifice and the service of the sacrifice takes precedence over Shabbos. Rambam asserts somewhat before (2:4) that part of the Leviim's service is to sing at the offering of public sacrifices offered each day: "...and with what do they play? With *nevalim*, **chalilim** (flutes) and *kinorot*..." The obvious question is, did they play the flute on only 12 days or every day?

Did the flute "strike" or "play"? Also, an interesting change in phrasing demands explanation. About the flute which was used 12 days in the year our *Mishnah* and Rambam say that the flute **"strikes"** whereas when Rambam mentions the flute which was played every day, he writes "and with what do they **play** music?...with flutes."

A more outstanding contradiction appears in Rambam: The *Gemora* discusses (*Sukkah* 50b) if *shirah* is primarily singing or playing instruments. In other words, the Leviim's *shirah* was by means of singing **and** playing instruments; the question is, which was the main ingredient. If playing instruments is the primary ingredient of *shirah*, they are played even on Shabbos (see *Ritva*, *Sukkah*, *ibid*). Rambam rules (*Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* 3:3) that *shirah* is primarily song, "that the main service of *shirah* is by mouth, and others stood there playing instruments." How, then, could Rambam rule that playing the flute takes precedence over Shabbos? (See *Lechem Mishneh*, *Hilchos Shofar Vesukkah Velulav* 8:13).

Two flutes served in the Temple: The author of *Tzafnas Pa'neiach* says (2nd edition, *Hilchos 'Avodah Zarah* 3:3) that we must conclude that two types of flutes served in the Temple!

One was meant to accompany the Leviim's song as they sang when the wine was poured at the *tamid* sacrifice. About this *shirah* we are told that it is primarily singing whereas playing the flute and the other instruments merely accompanied it. On the other hand, the other type of flute was played individually and therefore it was described as "the flute struck". This flute was sounded before the altar, as explained in our *sugya*, as opposed to other instruments that were played on the platform of the Leviim.

Now we understand that Rambam's aforesaid ruling that *shirah* is primarily song, relates to the Leviim's *shirah* accompanied by instruments including the flute and indeed, this flute was not used on Shabbos. However, the flute used before the altar on 12 days was not an accompaniment because the Leviim didn't sing while it "struck" and therefore playing it is part of the service of the sacrifice which takes precedence over Shabbos (see *Shiltei Giborim*, p. 51; '*Aroch Laner*, *Sukkah*, *ibid*; *Birkas Kohen* on our *sugya*).

It is interesting to note that we find a similar distinction about the trumpets used in the Temple. Many questions, which we shall not discuss in this article, brought the Acharonim to the conclusion that one sort of trumpet accompanied the Leviim in their song at each sacrifice while another type of trumpet was meant to elevate the remembrance of Israel before Hashem on the appropriate days (see the Netziv in his commentary on *Sifrei*, *Bemidbar*, 77, and a similar idea is mentioned in *Even HaAzel*, *Hilchos Temidin Umusafin*, Ch. 6; see further in *Diberos Ariel*, 23).

Playing an Organ in the Synagogue

Was an organ used in the Temple? This question accompanied a great commotion many years ago when changes and reforms began to spread in German communities. A great struggle was conducted between traditional Torah leaders and reformers who started to use organs in their synagogues. Concerning a gentile's playing an instrument in a synagogue on Shabbos, a firm ruling appeared in Hamburg in 5579 (1819), called *Eileh Divrei HaBris*, including the sharp statements of the leaders of the generation – Rabbi Akiva Eiger zt"l, Rabbi Yaakov of Lissa

author of *Nesivos* zt”l and the Chasam Sofer zt”l – who forbade it utterly.

In practice, all Jewish communities forbade playing instruments in a synagogue even on weekdays, as stated by the Chasam Sofer (*Responsa* V 192): “For even if (music) is permitted to rejoice a groom and bride, to cheer the sad hearts of *galus*, in the “small temple” (*bais haknesses*) it is not right to display joy before Him like the joy of Zion, for there is no joy before Him till ‘He who sits in heaven will laugh’” (see *Responsa Minchas Yitzchak*, V, 97).

As the reformers wanted to resemble the gentiles, they wanted particularly to use an organ in the synagogues, similar to the gentiles. When the opposers warned that this is forbidden also because of *chukos hagoy*, that it is forbidden to copy the gentiles’ customs, some replied that playing the organ should not be negated on weekdays because of the prohibition to copy gentiles. Indeed, they claimed, the gentiles use an organ in their churches but the organ was used in the Temple before gentiles began to use it. The *Gemora* explains (*Sanhedrin* 52b), that killing those condemned to death with a sword is not forbidden because of *chukos hagoyim* because this is already written in the Torah and is not considered copying the gentiles.

The Chasam Sofer counters the opposite (*Responsa*, VI, 86): How do we know that the gentiles began to use an organ only after the Temple era? About Yuval, who would “grasp the *kinor* and organ” (*Bereishis* 4:21), Rashi comments that he “grasped the *kinor* and organ for idolatry”! Not only that but he also assumes that even without this, it could be that the organ was not used in the Temple because its name – ‘ugav – resembles *shirei agavim* (romantic songs).

Rabbi David Tzvi Hoffman zt”l, author of *Responsa Melamed Leho’il*, devoted a special reply (I 16) to this topic and, among other things, clarifies if the organ was really used in the Temple and he takes the trouble to prove that it was not used, as follows.

Our *sugya* describes a musical instrument called a *magreifah* which served the Leviim as they sang. Its tremendous sound was heard as far as Yericho (*Tamid* 3:8) and has been identified by many commentators as an organ (see *Tiferes Yisrael*, *Tamid*, *ibid*, and the remarks of Ya’vetz, here). The *Mishnah* says (*Tamid* 5:6) that at a certain stage in the service of the *tamid* sacrifice “someone took the *magreifah* and threw it between the *ulam* and the altar” as a reminder for three things – to the *kohanim*, that the time came for prostration; for the Leviim, that the time came for *shirah*; and for the leader of the *ma’amad* (watch), who made the impure ones stand at the East Gate.

What is this *magreifah*? According to *Tosfos Yom Tov* (*ibid*), the *magreifah* was not a musical instrument at all as it can’t be that they threw it, as it could break. However, the *Raavad* commented (*Tamid*, *ibid*) that the *magreifah* is a musical instrument meant to produce many sounds at the same time and when the time came to “throw” it, they would play all its instruments together with a tremendous sound that made people tremble so that “a person could not hear his companion’s voice in Yerushalayim because of the sound of the *magreifah*” (*Tamid*, *ibid*). This is the *magreifah* cited in our *Gemora* and as the *Mishnah* mentions that it was only used for reminders, we therefore see that it didn’t serve the Leviim’s song in the Temple.