

# TEARS

*by Rabbi Daniel Travis*

The story is told of Napoleon, who was walking one evening through the streets of Paris with his entourage when he happened to pass by a synagogue. From inside emerged the sounds of large numbers of people weeping bitterly.

He inquired as to what the Jews were so upset about. His aide replied that they were mourning the destruction of their Temple.

"Their Temple was destroyed?" Napoleon asked. "How come I wasn't informed of this news?"

"Their Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed more than 1,700 years ago on this date," the aide explained.

Napoleon was amazed, and said, "A people that mourns the loss of their Temple for so long will surely survive to see it rebuilt."

Nowadays, every Tisha B'Av we still sit on the floor and try to bring ourselves to tears over the destruction of the Temple. However, many Jews today find it difficult to muster the level of anguish demonstrated in the above famous story.

The middle seven blessings of Shemoneh Esrei enumerate the glory of the Temple and the tragedy of exile. The blessings come together to provide a vision of Jerusalem and describe a complete picture of what life will be like when the redemption comes.

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