

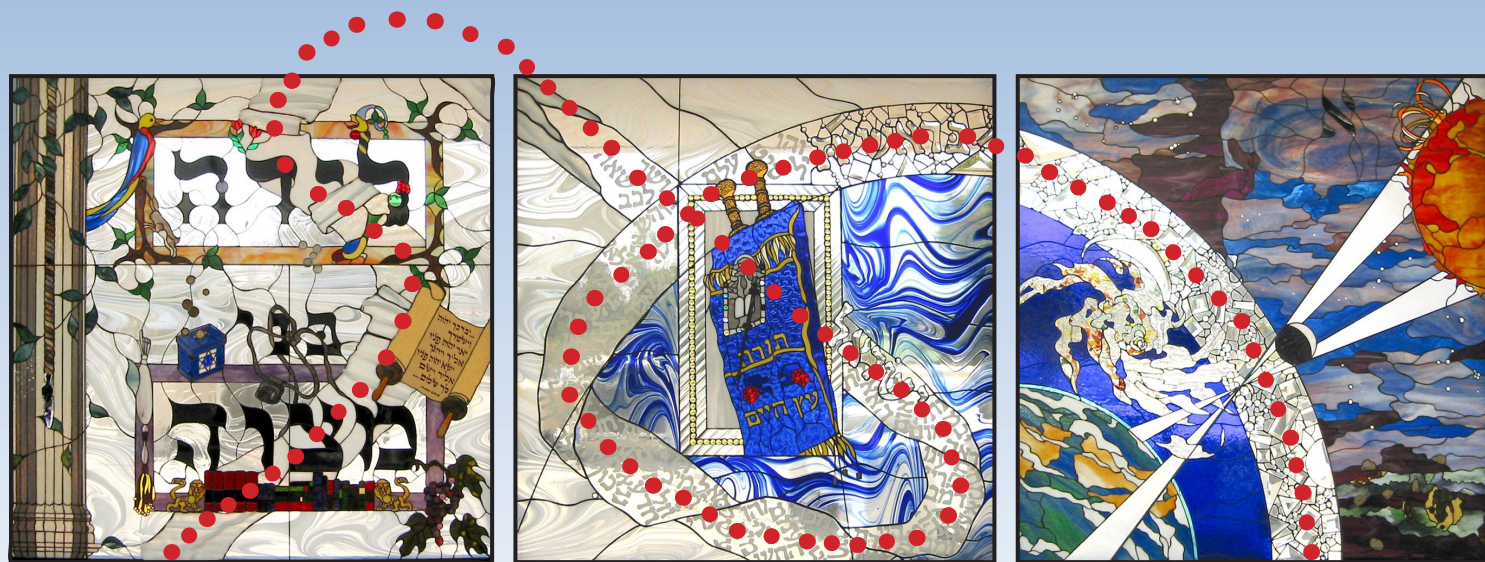
# A Guide to the Stained Glass Windows

Original Designs and Creations by Lynda Wisecup  
with assistance from craftspersons from within Congregation Shir Ha-Ma'alot

Congregation Shir Ha-Ma'alot is unique in having had the only known stained glass studio where congregants built a mural of windows. Stained glass artist Lynda Wisecup conceived the project and designed the windows.

In March of 1996 the first of seven windows—*Shabbat*—was installed in our synagogue. The seventh and final window—*Life Cycles II*—was installed in April 2010. Each window is over five feet square and contains thousands of individually cut and fit pieces of glass.

The first three windows share a common thread of the rainbow, shape of light, and the wimple. The wimple is the primary element that takes us through the life cycles.

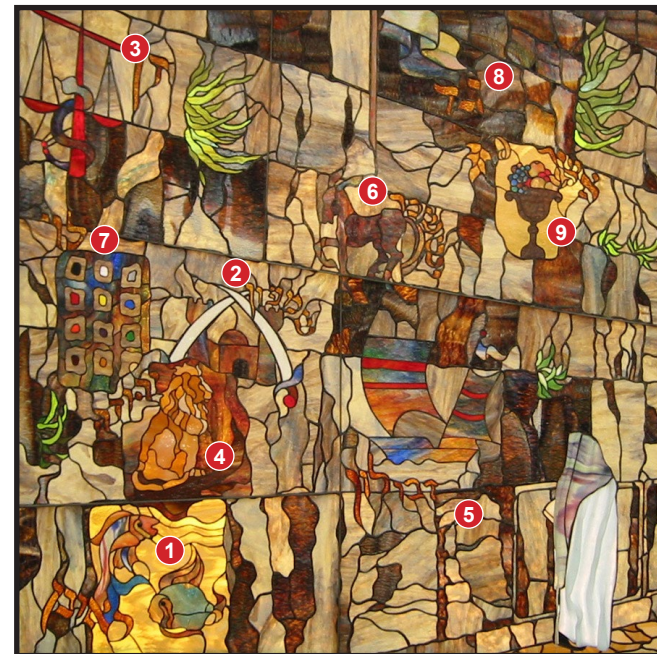


## Jerusalem

Completed April, 1998 and September, 1998

There are four main elements in these two windows depicting Jerusalem:

- The first, the Western Wall, is shown as a backdrop. This is the only remaining ruin of the Second Temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.
- The second element encompasses the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and their symbols:  
“All these were the tribes of Israel, twelve in number, and this is what their father said to them as he bade them farewell, addressing to each a parting word appropriate to him.” (Genesis 49:28)
  - Rueben**, you are my first born...exceeding in rank...(Genesis 49:3), Unstable as water. (49:4)
  - Simeon & Levi** are a pair. Weapons of violence are their swords (Genesis 49:3)
  - Levi**, They shall teach Jacob thy judgments and Israel thy law. (Deut. 33:9)
  - Judah**, is a lion's whelp. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet. (Genesis 49:9)
  - Zebulun** shall dwell at the haven of the sea. He shall be a haven for ships... (Genesis 49:13)
  - Issachar**, is a strong boned ass... He bent his shoulder to the burden and became a toiling serf. (Genesis 49:14)
  - Dan**, shall govern his people... and be a serpent by the road. A viper by the path... (Genesis 49:16)
  - Gad**, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last. (Genesis 49:19)
  - Asher's** bread shall be rich and he shall yield royal dainties. (Genesis 49:20)
  - Naphtali** is a hind let loose, which yields lovely fawns. (Genesis 49:21)
  - Joseph** is a fruitful bough... whose branches run over the wall. (Genesis 49:22)
  - Benjamin** is a ravenous wolf. In the morning he shall devour the sheep, and in the evening he divides the spoil. (Genesis 49:27)



- The third element incorporates some architectural landmarks in Jerusalem today. See if you can find: the Knesset, the Tower of David, the Marc Chagall windows, the Montefiore windmill, and the Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea scrolls are stored.
- Lastly, the fourth element is the oldest symbol of ritualized Judaism, the seven-branch menorah

# The Stained Glass Windows



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# Shabbat

Completed March, 1996

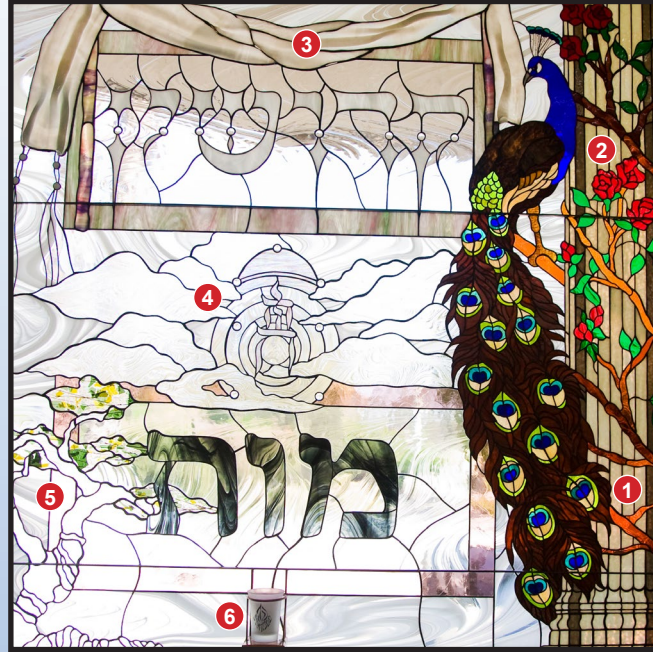


## Meditation following the candle blessing:

“May it be Your will my God and God of my ancestors that You grant me, my husband, all my relatives, and all Israel a good and long life. May You remember us with goodness and blessings and frequent us with fulfillment and compassion. Bless us with great blessings. Make our homes complete and cause Your Shekinah to dwell among us. May I be worthy to live to raise children and grand-children who are wise and understanding, God-loving, reverent seekers of truth and holiness who are lighting up the world with Torah and good deeds and all the productive labors of the Creator. Please hear my humble prayer at this time in the merits of our mothers Sarah, Rivka, Rachel, and Leah. Keep our candle lit and may it never be extinguished. Let the light of Your presence shine and save us. Amen”

# Life Cycles Two

Completed March, 2010



1. The Pillar is one of two pillars representing the second temple in Jerusalem (the other pillar is in the Life Cycles One window)
2. The Roses depict love
3. Marriage is one of the life cycles depicted in this window. The tallis is acting as a chuppah, the marriage canopy.
4. “Upper Jerusalem” includes a dome, concentric circles housing the four letters for G\_d and The Keter (a Kabbalistic human form)
5. Death is the other life cycle depicted by an olive tree as a metaphor for the ancient cemetery outside the walls of Jerusalem. The old roots are wrapping as teffilin is wrapped around your arm, creating the Hebrew letter, shin.
6. The final element is a functional Yahrzeit candleholder.

# Jerusalem

Completed April, 1998 and September 1998



There are four main elements to these two windows depicting Jerusalem:

- The first, the Western Wall, is shown as a backdrop
- The second element encompasses the Twelve Tribes of Israel
- The third element is architectural landmarks in Jerusalem today
- The fourth element is the seven-branch menorah

Turn to the back panel of this brochure for details of each of these elements



# Life Cycles One

Completed March, 2001



Two of the four life cycle events; birth (leydah) and b'nai mitzvah are depicted in this window.

The wimple is the primary element that takes us through the life cycles. A wimple is a garment made by the women of the family to celebrate a birth.\*

It was decorated in a very personal way, but always included these three blessings in Hebrew for the baby: to study Torah, to be married, and to do good deeds. The Hebrew letters were elaborately decorated.

This garment was used as a Torah binder during the life cycle simchas. The column is one of two, representing the second temple. The plumb line is a tribute to the crafts persons who constructed this mural of windows and a metaphor for God, the builder.

\*Ashkenazi tradition from Holland, Brussels, Germany and Switzerland, a tradition almost lost after World War II.

# The Torah

Completed May, 1999



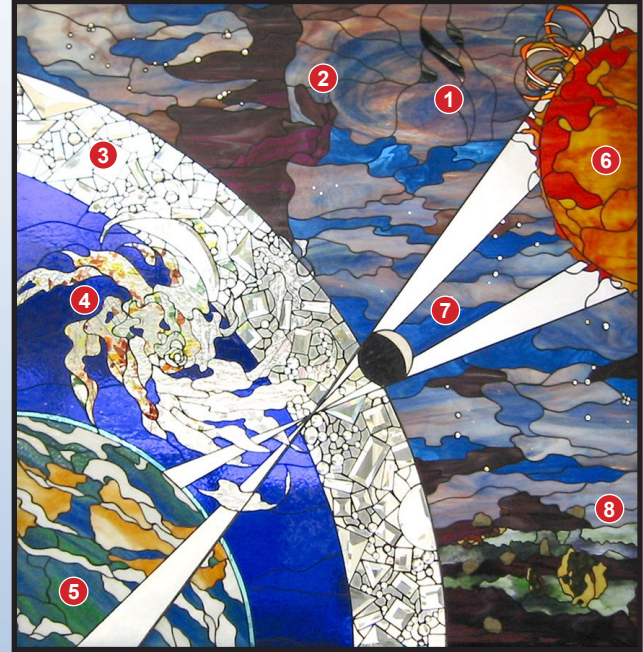
The light of the rainbow spills into the Torah. The shape of light surrounds the Torah with the 72 names and continues toward our life cycles.

The Zohar explains the 72 names Moses used to split the Red Sea including all the sequences of DNA consciousness that provide healing, success, protection and fulfillment in all aspects of life.

This Torah contains many of the important elements. Included in the window design are bells, the ten commandments, the twelve tribes, filigree finials, pomegranates, lion's head, and the tree of life.

# Creation

Completed September, 1996



1. Sitting in a sea of calm, above it all, the Alef—God, one, the beginning
2. The horse's head nebula in the constellation Orion
3. The rainbow separating inner and outer space, representing the strongest human emotion, HOPE
4. A nebula giving birth to the four seasons
5. The earth
6. The sun
7. Veils of light
8. An asteroid belt including stones that Cantor Arië Shikler hand-carried from Israel