

## **Rabbi Zamore's Message for October, 2013**

At the time of writing this, Yom Kippur has just ended and Sukkot is four days away. Traditionally, the first mitzvah commandment you are supposed to fulfill after breaking the Yom Kippur fast is driving the first nail into your sukkah. One of the great builders of Reform Judaism, Rabbi Stephen Wise was reputed to have innovated the tradition of actually nailing two boards together on the bima at the end of the Yom Kippur neilah service. In his honor, [Stephen Wise Free Synagogue](#) in NYC still lives this tradition every year.

No matter how we live it, the ritual of starting the building of one's sukkah immediately after Yom Kippur sends a powerful message about our calendar: No Jewish holiday stands on its own. Rather, each connects into the greater holiday cycle, one flowing into the next. Therefore, we do not end holidays; we look into our calendar to see what is next. Maybe this is a good approach for all of life. Don't hold your breath, waiting for this moment to end; be in the moment and then look ahead to flow into what next awaits for you.

As for celebrating our Jewish holidays, looking ahead prevents the common problem of being caught off guard by our shifting calendar. Since the Jewish calendar is lunar-based and the secular calendar is solar-based, our holidays can shift by a month's span when set on the secular calendar. Without the reminders we receive from our greater culture concerning the secular holidays (think of the advertisements for Halloween that start in August), the Jewish holidays can seem to pop out of nowhere.

As we move away from Yom Kippur, we look ahead to Sukkot, and then soon after, Simchat Torah. This year Hannukah will be super early, starting before Thanksgiving. So, there is a great deal to look forward to. This is a great time to make sure you have a Jewish calendar – paper or electronic.

Here's to looking ahead. I hope you have many happy experiences in the new year!

L'Shalom,

Rabbi Mary L. Zamore