Corporal Tibor “Teddy” Rubin, maybe one of the most unlikely Medal of Honor recipients. A Holocaust survivor, Rubin was an ordinary soldier with an extraordinary sense of duty, responsibility, and dedication to his fellow human beings.

Each year, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum leads the Nation in commemorating Days of Remembrance. Days of Remembrance was established by the U.S. Congress to memorialize the six million Jewish people murdered in the Holocaust—as well as the millions of non-Jewish victims—of Nazi persecution.

History teaches us that genocide can be prevented if enough people care enough to act. Our choices in response to hatred truly do matter, and together we can help fulfill the promise of “NEVER AGAIN.”

—U.S. Holocaust Museum
Tibor Rubin was born June 18, 1929, in Pásztó, Hungary. In 1944, with news spreading that German Gestapo were arresting Hungarian Jews, his parents decided to send him, then 13 years old, to Switzerland. Accompanied by Polish men, who were on the run from the Nazis, Rubin began the trek to Switzerland. The group was captured near the border of Italy and Switzerland. Rubin was deported to Mauthausen concentration camp.

In May 1945, 15-year-old Rubin was skeletally thin and barely conscious when American troops liberated the camp. He credited Army medics for saving his life and the lives of other survivors. He wanted to show his gratitude by becoming an American “GI Joe.”

In 1948, he was admitted to the United States. Due to language barriers, he failed the Army entrance exam twice. Finally, with a little help from some fellow test takers, he managed to pass the exam and enlist in the Army.

By July 1950, Rubin was part of the 8th Cavalry Regiment, First Cavalry Division, fighting in Korea. He was under the leadership of a sergeant who fellow soldiers described as a “vicious anti-Semite,” and who regularly gave Rubin the most dangerous assignments.

Through it all, he had an extraordinary sense of duty, responsibility, and dedication to his fellow human soldiers.

On November 2, 1950, a seriously wounded Rubin was captured by the Chinese.

After 30 months of imprisonment, he and his fellow prisoners were freed.

At 24-years-old, Rubin had spent nearly four years of his life surviving inhumane camp conditions in Germany and Korea.

Finally, in 2005, President George W. Bush presented the Medal of Honor to him for his heroic actions during the Korean War.