

November 20th is the anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials that began in 1945.

The Nuremberg Trials set a precedent. And the Holocaust was the genesis of both Genocide as an international crime, and also of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Speaking of human rights, we are about to celebrate Thanksgiving. Most of us think of it as an American holiday with roots in Plymouth Massachusetts. That's not the entire story.

The Pilgrims were literal interpreters of the bible, and in fact, they were actually re-creating the Sukkot festival which started thousands of years earlier. Our tradition of ushpizin, strangers, translated to the Pilgrim's desire to make peace with the local natives, and invite them to a feast.

Actually, this American tradition pre-dates what happened at Plymouth in 1621. In 1578, on his final voyage to the Canadian polar regions, Martin Frobisher held a formal ceremony in Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island (which is now known as Nunavut in the native Inuit language). Frobisher wanted to give thanks to God. In a service ministered by the preacher Robert Wollfall, the Europeans celebrated Communion, the first ever service in those regions.

I was amazed to learn that history, because in 1971, I had the good fortune to spend a couple of hours in Frobisher Bay. Little did I know back then, that the American Thanksgiving started right there.

As we all gather with family this holiday weekend, let us all keep in mind the incredible blessings that we share – that we are here, in the Diaspora, living comfortable lives by God's grace.

Surrounded by this good fortune, we must NEVER FORGET those who were far less fortunate only 70 years ago.

Zachor! Remember! Thanks!

