

came at the end of this statement, where he said, "An appeal to arms and the God of hosts is all that is left us. But we shall not fight our battle alone. There is a just God that presides over the destinies of nations. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone. Is life so dear or peace so sweet to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, almighty God." Patrick Henry understood the power and the content of Scripture.

Jonathan Whitherspoon, who was a minister and signed the Declaration of Independence, said "A republic, once equally poised, must either preserve its virtue or lose its liberty." Jonathan Whitherspoon knew that that virtue came from the Holy Scriptures, the Bible.

This Chamber and all the institutions of this great Republic are surrounded by images and phrases from Scripture. In this very Chamber is a portrait of Moses, the first lawgiver. The Supreme Court also holds several images of Moses. The south frieze prominently displays Moses holding Ten Commandments. In the Library of Congress stands a large statue of Moses alongside a statue of the Apostle Paul. The Great Reading Room of the Library is filled with Scriptures.

So today, to be able to stand here in the Halls of Congress and to call attention to the impact of Biblical authority, what a great opportunity that is. I thank the God of Scripture for that opportunity, and I thank my colleagues for bringing this to the floor tonight.

TAKING CARE OF AMERICA'S VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, it has been a great comfort to listen to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle talk about National Bible Week. The Bible can bring great comfort to all of us, especially in time of need. And when I look at the legislation that we have been trying to pass and legislation that is coming forward, I hope we can all remember the words of the Bible and take care of each other and not the almighty dollar.

Mr. Speaker, next week is November 11th. We remember those who answered the call when America needed them most. Honoring our veterans reminds us that our freedoms come at a cost and with liberty comes responsibility. Congress has a responsibility to take care of the men and women who are serving and who have served. This year we passed legislation to increase the VA budget by \$6.7 billion above last year's level. This is the largest single increase in veterans funding in the history of the VA. This increase will help better serve the health care needs of our veterans, both young and old, by providing over 1,000 new VA case-workers to reduce the unacceptable delays in receiving their benefits.

Our young veterans are coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan with new injuries. We have seen a dramatic rise in traumatic brain injuries due to IEDs and roadside bombs. As of January, over 2,000 of our brave men and women have been diagnosed with TBI. These veterans need a high level of intensive care when they return from battle.

I understand the issues our soldiers who come home with TBI face. That is why I worked with Defense Subcommittee Chairman MURTHA to include language in the Department of Defense authorization that sets aside funding and support for TBI treatment.

We are in a new century and the members of our Armed Forces, our veterans and their loved ones, need a new GI Bill. A new GI Bill should increase funding for veterans' medical care; employment assistance for our homeless veterans throughout this country; increased pay for our active duty members, so they can actually have a family life; expand current benefits under the current Montgomery GI Bill.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 2702, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act. This legislation provides education assistance for our young veterans returning home from the war under the Montgomery GI Bill.

In addition to increased funding for a new GI Bill, there needs to be other substantive changes made to veterans care. There should be a guaranteed funding stream for veterans health care. Access to health care should improve and there should be increased funding for special VA programs such as posttraumatic stress disorder treatment, homelessness, long-term care.

We must also address the problem called concurrent receipt. Currently other Federal retirees get both disability and retirement pay. But we deny our veterans this privilege because of an outdated law.

Congress must authorize full payment of both retirement pay and disability compensation to more than hundreds of thousands of disabled veterans and military retirees.

What we need to do is keep the promises we made to our veterans. I am hoping Congress in the coming days, months, and years will take care of these promises. We owe this to the American people. We owe it to our young people that sign up to fight the wars that we are fighting. If we don't keep our promises, why should our young people join to keep this country secure?

I salute our veterans, thank them for their service, and say God bless America.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ADERHOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ADERHOLT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SALI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SALI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the greatest, most influential book known to man, the Holy Bible. November 18 through 25 is National Bible Week, and it fittingly coincides with Thanksgiving.

The Bible teaches us that we have very much to be thankful for. And although we ought to remind one another of this truth at all times, I am glad there is a time set aside for remembering our blessings.

The Holy Bible teaches that we are all created by God in His image. And as such, each individual has a certain dignity that should be respected. One John 4:7-11 is one of my favorite passages of scripture. It says: Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Elsewhere, in Matthew 16:24, Jesus tells his disciples that if anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. I particularly like this verse because, coupled with the first passage from 1 John, it reminds me that I am to love God first, others second and myself third. How different would our personal interactions be if we took this to heart and sought to love others in the way that the Bible encourages us to?

It is a lesson worth learning, to love one another. In a city that oftentimes seems so bitterly divided, glimpses of true peace and genuine care seem so rare.

Holy Scripture, which served as guiding light for so many of our Founding Fathers, can also illuminate a path for us today. In spite of all of our differences, there are many things that we have in common: we have a common creator, a common desire to serve our country and a common inherent worth by virtue of being creations of the Almighty. As we go about our daily business, I think it would behoove us to remember that the Good Book teaches to love one another because we have been loved by God.

In all of the many chapters of my life, the Bible has served as a source of great wisdom, comfort and insight. Whether as a husband, a child, a father, a lawyer, or legislator, I have purposed to rely on the word of God to give direction in times of doubt. I applaud the efforts of my friends here in the people's House and around the country to recognize what is truly a treasure. I hope and pray that each Member of

this House, their staff and all of our fellow citizens take time in the upcoming weeks to not only reflect on the great truth found in the Bible, but also to count our blessings and to give thanks.

On a personal note, I am quite sure that my third grade teacher, Mrs. McClain, prayed for my salvation when I was young. I believe my seventh grade reading teacher, Mrs. Cantrell, prayed for me, as did my high school band teacher, Mr. Jim Henry. They joined a long list of relatives, my sister, Annette; my brother, Joe; my great, great grandfather, John Henry Fortson, pastor of the Fishing Creek Baptist Church in Washington, Georgia, for over 40 years. He prayed for the salvation of his children and grandchildren to seven generations.

I reconfirm tonight that their prayers were fruitful. Jesus is my friend and I am a student of his word, the Bible. I understand His work on the cross as the sole means of my salvation because the Bible has taught me so.

Yes, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tell me so. May all those who prayed for me so diligently reflect in Thanksgiving this year that God has heard their prayers for me, and I will thank the God of the Bible for their prayers which resulted in my salvation according to the plan that He set out in the Bible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the passage of H. Res. 550, congratulating the people of Ethiopia on the second millennium of Ethiopia. I introduced this resolution, along with my colleague and fellow member of the Congressional Ethiopian American Caucus, Congressman DONALD PAYNE.

Ethiopia's calendar is based on the Orthodox Tewahedo calendar which is derived from the Julian calendar. The West follows the Gregorian calendar. On September 11 of this year, Ethiopians around the world celebrated a new millennium according to their official calendar.

H. Res. 550 demonstrates congressional support for the Ethiopian American community, and I plan to use the attention surrounding the millennium to highlight priority issues, including political reconciliation and peace in the Horn of Africa.

True reconciliation includes the speedy release of political prisoners and granting members of opposition parties the right to participate in a democratic society. Peace in that part of the world will have to involve a final demarcation and implementation of the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

In the spirit of new beginnings, it is my hope that the Ethiopian Government and members of the political opposition take every necessary step toward true reconciliation. It is my hope that Eritrea and Ethiopia will come to a peaceful and fair resolution and finally be able to work together to encourage stability in the region.

Members of the Congressional Ethiopian American Caucus are eager to use the millennium as an opportunity to bring national attention to Ethiopia, the original homes of hundred of thousands of Ethiopian Americans. Ethiopia is a symbol of freedom. It is a country with rich history and culture. Ethiopians made important contributions for the freedom of many African countries and fought courageously to defend its own.

This resolution pays tribute to the many sacrifices made by Ethiopians over the centuries. In the wake of a tumultuous period in Ethiopian history, it was important for me to do more to increase visibility around this country that has meant so much to an important, but largely overlooked, minority constituency.

We want to do more to show our appreciation to the Ethiopian American community for all that they continue to contribute to our society and, more importantly, to support their efforts to bring national attention to the issues that matter to them.

Ethiopian Americans make up the second largest African immigrant community in the United States, with U.S.-Ethiopian relations initiated in 1903. Recognizing Ethiopia's role in the formation of a Pan-African movement and defeating colonial rule are key points in the resolution, and a significant aspect of Ethiopian identity.

The resolution also recognizes the efforts of all those who organized the millennium celebrations. The African Union has already declared the Ethiopia Millennium as the African Millennium and acknowledges the critical role Ethiopia plays in keeping peace on the continent. I thank my colleagues for passing H. Res. 550, and I look forward to the Senate vote.

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank both of my colleagues for organizing this time tonight in recognition of National Bible Week.

My own experience with the Bible began when I was an 18-year-old fresh-

man at the University of Kansas in 1973. I was approached by some people who asked me if I knew what was in the Bible. I said I knew what it was all about. But then I had to admit I had never read it for myself. The only honest thing I could do at that point was to read the Bible for myself.

When I read the Gospel of John, I ended up discovering a personal relationship with Jesus Christ who became my Lord and Savior. In that gospel He says: I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know where in their spiritual journey people may be who are listening tonight, but I do know this: It is better to read the Bible for oneself and not just to take someone else's word for what is in it. For me, it made all of the difference in the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

"NO" ON PERU

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this week the new Congress, the Democratic Congress, will consider its first bilateral trade agreement during this session: the Bush-negotiated free trade agreement with Peru. This week, this Democratic Congress has an opportunity, an opportunity to prove that we are different from previous Congresses. We have an opportunity to demonstrate we have heard from America's voters who are fed up with job losses, trade deficits, and race-to-the-bottom wages for our middle class.

The American people expect us to reflect their concerns. Yet this bill is merely another godchild of NAFTA.

What is the public telling us? In a March 2007 poll by the Wall Street Journal/NBC before the recent scandals involving tainted food and toy imports, 54 percent of Democratic voters said free trade agreements have hurt the United States compared with 21 percent who said they have helped.

Then the Wall Street Journal in an October 4 front-page article stated that by a poll they had done, by a nearly 2 to 1 margin, Republican voters believe free trade is bad for the U.S. economy, a shift in opinion that mirrors Democratic views and suggests trade deals could face high hurdles under a new President.

And then a Democratic pollster found that 67 percent, two-thirds, of Americans believe unfair trade agreements are making it harder for Americans to keep good jobs. Thus, defeating the