

have this go through in veiled secrecy on a rush in the next day or two without America knowing what is on the table.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, very, very much. There has been much discussion. We are going to be yielding this floor to our Republican colleagues, and I see them beginning to assemble, all of them who, just 3 weeks ago, were deficit hawks.

I am going to point this out, and I am going to leave it here for my colleagues who will be talking about why we ought to increase the deficit.

The current structural deficit is about \$500 billion. We are going to add, just this year, \$115 billion on top of that. You can see that. But over the next decade, that present structural deficit will grow to nearly \$1 trillion a year, and we will add to it another couple hundred billion dollars.

The deficit hawks have a choice. They can live with the deficit, forget they ever were deficit hawks and just increase the deficit with this 1 percent tax bill, H.R. 1, or they could do what I call the Texas two-step.

Keep in mind, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is a Texan. The Texas two-step is first you seriously cut the revenues with this tax bill that is not a reform but, rather, a bill that actually 50 percent of the \$1.5 trillion reduction goes to the American corporations and the top 1 percent. Forget about the deficit or do the Texas two-step: cut the revenues and then cut the programs.

What are the programs?

You mentioned Medicare. Already in the budget that passed this House with Mr. RYAN as Speaker was a \$500 billion reduction to Medicare and a \$700 billion or \$800 billion reduction to Medicaid, 60 percent of which goes to the elderly in nursing homes. That is what they have in mind.

□ 1830

Secondly, they are going to talk about a trillion-dollar infrastructure. No way. The money is gone. There will be no infrastructure program, no roads, no trains, no buses, no levees, no repair.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. GARAMENDI, I would point out, in addition to tinkering with the public utility bonds out there, that public utility financing that will be devastated by this bill, adds to the further woes for building our investments and infrastructure of all kinds.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Exactly, and you might add education to that. So what do you do? Student loans of which \$1.4 trillion and nearly a trillion of that is owned by the Federal Government, these students are paying interest to the Federal Government; and to add to that, we are going to deny them the ability to deduct the loan interest that they are paying.

This is really just hypocritical, and it is very harmful to the economy. We want to do job training. Forget it. The

money is gone. The Texas Two Step will deny us the money that we need for education, reduce the revenues, and then cut the programs to attempt to bring back under control the deficit. It did not work. It will not work. And what it means is, the American economy that is recovering is going to be given a wallop on the side of its head, and we are going to see some real serious problems as we attempt to build the foundation for future economic growth. The money will not be there.

Mr. Speaker, I suspect that that emergency meeting of the Rules Committee is to specifically deal with the problem that was announced by the Congressional Budget Office just 3 hours ago that said this tax bill will, because of the sequestration law—it is a law—will create an automatic \$25 billion reduction in Medicare immediately and another \$111 billion reduction in programs, not to be determined by the Representatives of the people of the United States but, rather, by Mick Mulvaney, the head of the Office of Management and Budget, who is known to be really weird in his budgeting proposal.

He will make a \$111 billion reduction all on his own, if this tax bill passes as it is written today.

This is serious business, Americans. This is about your future. This is about your ability to have a decent job in America, a decent infrastructure, a decent education system, and medical services.

What about the children's health program which is not yet in place? It is unbelievable that, without one public hearing, the Republicans are determined to pass a \$1.5 trillion tax cut of which 50 percent of the benefit goes to the top 1 percent, and America's corporations are given yet another reason to offshore their jobs with what is called territorial pricing.

This is where we are, folks. Wrap it up, if you will.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I would just say: Let's do this with our eyes wide open. Trickle-down isn't going to happen. Tax reform, this is not tax reform. Certainly, tax cuts where you aid the upper-income strata and corporations at the expense of an increase of taxes to the middle class is what this is about. It is pathetic. It is devastating. It is disastrous, and it ought to be denied.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is exactly right. Finally, as we turn this floor over to our Republican colleagues, I am really interested in hearing why—and I see one of our colleagues from my area—why in the Central Valley of California where anywhere from 110,000 to 150,000 families who pay taxes are going to lose their State and local tax deduction? They will lose somewhere between \$7,000 and \$12,000 of deductions.

That amounts to an increase in taxes anywhere from \$1,500 to \$2,000. I want to hear them explain why that is good tax policy. We will see what they have

to say. They will be on the floor in a few moments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH). The Chair would remind Members to direct all remarks to the Chair, and to formally yield and reclaim time when under recognition.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to come to the House floor tonight to celebrate National Bible Week.

This is an opportunity, for the next hour, to celebrate the tremendous influence of the Bible on the freedoms we enjoy today in America. We are truly blessed to live in a nation where we are free to worship and read the Holy Scriptures without fear of persecution.

There are many places throughout the world, unfortunately, where such freedoms do not exist. Americans have the right, under our wonderful system of government, to respect and study the Bible, or any other system of belief, if they so choose, or even no belief at all. That is the beauty of the American way, and I believe it is founded and goes back to the Bible.

In 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared the week of Thanksgiving to be National Bible Week. Every U.S. President since has followed this tradition by declaring this time of year to be National Bible Week. The National Bible Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have designated the specific days of November 12 through 18 of this year as National Bible Week.

This is the week set aside to recognize the Bible as a foundational building block of Western civilization, the Judeo-Christian heritage, and the legacy that motivated and shaped the founding of the United States. In this hour, we will hear from Members of Congress from various faith traditions and denominations speak about what the Bible means to them and what it means to the country. We are here, in keeping with tradition, to recognize National Bible Week.

Mr. Speaker, I am just going to speak for a couple of moments about my own personal experience and then turn it

over to some Members who want to share some thoughts that I think bear worth listening to.

When I was a freshman at the University of Kansas four decades ago, someone asked me if I knew what the Bible was about. I said, yes, I knew what it was all about. But I realized that my answer was actually pretty presumptuous because I had never actually read any of it.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if this might be true for others who might be listening tonight. The only honest thing I could do at that point was to read the Bible for myself. I started by reading the Gospel of John in the New Testament. When I read it, I discovered that I hadn't known at all what the Bible was about.

In that Gospel, Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me." And I ended up discovering a personal relationship with Jesus Christ who became my Lord and Savior.

Mr. Speaker, this is what I know from personal experience. It is better to read the Bible for one's self 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. My life has been totally different since then as a result.

As King David says in the Psalms: "The unfolding of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple."

As we celebrate National Bible Week, we remember the importance of faith in both our private and public lives. We recognize the Bible's powerful message of hope. We cherish the wisdom of the Bible, and we thank God for providing this Holy Book that has truly been, in the words of the Scripture, "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path."

Mr. Speaker, at this point, I yield to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I have a riddle for everyone. What is the most dangerous book ever published? What is the most powerful book ever written? What is the most cited book by Presidents and our Nation's Founders? What is the most prized possession that I own? The Bible.

It is a controversial book. Many people have it on their shelf at home, or it gathers dust on some end table, and people think it is a pretty innocuous book. But more people have lost their lives over this book than any other book ever written.

Many rulers have ordered the gathering and burning of all Bibles in the country, and, even today, in countries like North Korea, possession of a Bible results in death or sentence to a labor camp.

Why? Well, because it is more than a historic book, although it is; and it is more than a collection of wise advice and spellbinding stories, which it is. It has the audacity to claim something

radical and all-inspiring at the same time. It claims to be the Word of God.

Now, as a result, it changes lives. The Bible reveals a plan. It starts right out with these words: "In the beginning, God made. . . ." That changes everything. That sets the stage saying that we are not here by chance, that there is a loving God who has a design, and we are a part of it. It makes a difference if we have a plan. It reveals that plan. It also gives us a purpose.

Part of the Psalms in 139 says, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" by a loving God. We are not here by chance. And it goes on and says, and this is God speaking: "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

That is exciting.

The Bible also gives us power. It gives us power to overcome evil, hardship, and trials of life by revealing how God sent his son, Jesus, to introduce us to God and make a way for us to have a personal relationship with the living God who made us and loves us. It is incredible.

The Bible also gives us peace and hope as a result, not just for today, but for the future. I start each day reading from my Bible, and I am so thankful for it. It has made a difference in my life. I want to invite anyone who has never read it to read it and to discover God's plan and purpose for your life which will give you power and peace. So let this most radical book ever written touch and bless your life.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Missouri for her wise words and thought-provoking words.

I yield to the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM).

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 76th celebration of National Bible Week. As I reflected on what I would share with everyone tonight, I couldn't get away from my background and my family heritage of being raised by Christian parents, who were raised by Christian grandparents, who worked hard and believed that the instruction book for life was the Word of God.

Bryon and I have chosen to raise our children in much that same way. In fact, when I was telling my family—we have a group text that we text in all the time with my kids, my husband and I. I was telling them that it was National Bible Week. I said to them: Do you kids remember what the Junior Bible Quiz answer is? For the very first question in the Junior Bible Quiz book is: What is the Bible?

And my middle daughter, Kennedy, who is 20 years old, immediately texted back, and she said: The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is His revelation to all people of Himself and His plan for salvation. I said: Good job, Kenners.

You see, because we—my grandparents grew up going to church and

became very frustrated that it was religious; that it wasn't a personal relationship with the Lord. In fact, so much so, that they decided that they would plant their own church. It is the church that I go to today, that our entire family goes to today. But for a year, they held Bible studies in homes seeking God's will for their lives and what it meant to have a personal relationship with Him and to spread it to their community.

They were very poor, but they knew that everything in their life, their success, and their family's hope and future relied on the Lord's will and them being obedient to it.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up as a young girl coming downstairs in the middle of the night for a drink of water to find my dad on his knees reading his Bible in the middle of the living room. He had a bad back. He worked hard. He was always in pain, and whenever he had a difficult time on the farm or couldn't sleep because of the pain that was in his body, the first thing he would do would be to read his Bible.

Oftentimes, we didn't realize how much time he really did spend worshipping God, and reading His words to find comfort and release through some of the difficult times that he had gone through.

I remember being 13 years old and being very insecure. In fact, my mom said she worried about me. She wondered if I was going to be a young girl who would grow up proud. I didn't have many friends. I didn't think I was attractive. I didn't think I had any gifts. She sat me down at the kitchen table, and she read to me Scriptures out of the Bible that told me how God saw me; that God saw me above and not beneath; that He saw me as someone who had plans for me from the time I was in the womb. And you know what? I bought it. I completely changed my attitude and my perspective of myself that day because of God's Word that was spoken over me by my mother.

So we as a family, from the time I was little, went to church Sunday mornings. We went Sunday nights. We went Wednesday evenings.

□ 1845

We knew that if the doors were open on church, we were to be there, and we were to be meditating on God's Words in our lives. That is how Bryon and I have chosen to raise our kids as well. We put them in Junior Bible Quiz because we wanted God's Word hidden in their heart. I am thankful that today they still have God's Word hidden in their heart.

Mr. Speaker, Jesus tells us in Matthew 7: "Anyone who listens to My teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it was built on bedrock."

How often does it feel like we are stuck in that storm, as though the

floodwaters are rising around us and around people of faith, as though the winds are beating on our door?

It is during these times that we must lean on our foundation, the Bible, our instruction book.

It is in that Bible that God reveals how He would like to use us as instruments of faith and as defenders of freedom that show Christ's love and compassion to our community, Nation, and world. Allowing Him to guide us through His Word is the surest way to navigate any storm.

But so many times, people try to navigate our policy debates in this Chamber by fighting to change one another's minds. Mr. Speaker, I am convinced what we ought to be doing is seeking God to change their hearts, gearing their hearts toward Him. I recognize that that takes trust, and it takes faith, but that is what we are directed to do.

It is written in Proverbs: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

Mr. Speaker, I pray that we are being servants for God's good, that we allow Him to light our path, and that we humble ourselves enough to build our house on His firm Biblical foundation. In this way, whatever we do, we do it to the glory of God.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her heartfelt remarks.

Many of the early American settlers came to the New World with the express purpose of following the Bible according to the convictions of their own consciences. One of the first acts of Congress during the tumultuous beginning of our Nation was the authorization of an American-published Bible. The war with the British had cut off the supply of any Bibles from England.

Our Founding Fathers understood how important it was for the American people to have Bibles, so, in 1782, Congress reviewed, approved, and authorized the first known English language Bible to be printed in America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to my friend and colleague, Congressman DOUG LAMBORN, for organizing this Special Order series in recognition of the 76th anniversary of National Bible Week.

I am delighted to stand with these other Members today to share our perspectives on why the Bible is so important to us and to our country. As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, there is really no better time to present these reflections.

I wanted to share the preface to a historic text that I have in my collection. What I am holding here is a copy of the New Testament Bible study course that was approved by and published for the public schools of Dallas, Texas, by its board of education in September of 1946. The preface was written

by Henry Van Dyke, and it is a wonderful summary of what the Bible means to us and to the world.

Mr. Speaker, let me read to you what it says here in the text:

Born in the East and clothed in that form and imagery, the Bible walks the ways of the world with familiar feet and enters land after land to find its own everywhere. It has learned to speak in hundreds of languages to the hearts of men. It comes into the palace to tell the monarch that he is a servant of the Most High and into the cottage to assure the peasant that He is a son of God. Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight, and wise men ponder them as parables of life. It has a word of peace for the time of peril, a word of comfort for the time of calamity, a word of light for the hour of darkness. Its oracles are repeated in the assembly of the people, and its counsels whispered in the ear of the lonely. The wicked and the proud tremble at its warnings, but to the wounded and the penitent, it has a mother's voice. The wilderness and the solitary place have been made glad by it, and the fire on the hearth has lit the reading of its well-worn pages. It has woven itself into our dearest dreams so that love, friendship, sympathy, devotion, memory, and hope put on the beautiful garments of its treasured speech, breathing of frankincense and myrrh. No man is poor or desolate who has this treasure for his own. When the landscape darkens and the trembling pilgrim comes to the valley named of the shadow, he is not afraid to enter. He takes the rod and the staff of Scripture in his hand. He says to friend and comrade: Good-Bye; we shall meet again. And comforted by that support, he goes toward the lonely pass as one who walks through the darkness into light.

Mr. Speaker, I love those words. I also love the words that are inscribed above the Speaker, where it says in the marble: In God We Trust.

There is a reason for that. Our Founders understood that this is our foundation. George Washington, the father of our country, famously said in his Farewell Address: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

Adams was our second President. He comes next. He said: "Our Constitution is made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other."

We have to remember these truths. I close with the words of "The Gipper." Ronald Reagan said it more recently: "If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, we will be a nation gone under."

I am so grateful for National Bible Week. I am so grateful to my friends and colleagues here for our recognition of this great truth, what it means to our country, and what it means to each of us.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for his wonderful thoughts. He quoted some of the Presidents in our great country's history. I have two more quotes along with that same line.

The gentleman mentioned Ronald Reagan, "The Gipper." In his own National Bible Week declaration, he wrote when he was in office: "When I took the oath of office, I requested the

Bible be open to 2 Chronicles 7:14, which reads: 'If My people, which are called by My name shall humble themselves, pray, seek My face, and turn from wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and forgive their sin and heal their land.'"

The President said: "This passage expresses my hope for the future of this Nation and the world."

One last quote along this line. President Abraham Lincoln once said: "I have but to say it is the best gift God has given to man. All the good the savior gave to the world was communicated through this book. But for it we could not know right from wrong. All things most desirable for man's welfare, here and hereafter, are found portrayed in it."

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), who is my good friend.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague from Colorado for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate so much tonight the opportunity to speak here during Special Orders. We could talk about the principles of charity from the Scriptures. We could talk from the Scriptures on principles of science. We could talk on principles of education. We could even talk about the principles of taxation and be very up to date as we deal with that here.

But tonight, as we discuss the issues of the Bible in this National Bible Week, I want to go back to my earliest days in my childhood home. I thank God that I had a mother and a father who would speak to me about God's Word, from God's Word, and impart God's Word in my life even when I didn't want it or didn't understand it.

I remember from my earliest days being taught to memorize Psalm 119:11, where it says: "Thy Word I have treasured in my heart. That I might not sin against Thee."

As a young man, the thoughts of sin in some cases were enticing, but I am glad that I had the opportunity to put the Scriptures in my life because ultimately, through the course of time, it truly did change my life.

It brought me to the Book of Romans, where in Romans, the third chapter verse 23 said: "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

With that verse in the Psalm, my mother would say: Tim, this book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book.

I found the truth in both of those statements. What I found there in Romans 3:23, that we have all sinned, I identified with that. But it didn't end there because I went over a few pages to Romans 5:8, where it said: "But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Those are words of Scripture. The Bible impacted my life. As a young man, ultimately, I had to ask: Is that true?

I am so thankful that ultimately I admitted the truth, and I came to Romans again, chapter 10:13, where it says: "For whosoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."

My good friend from Colorado indicated how that changed his life. It changed my life as well, admitting personally that I was a sinner in need of a savior. The Bible said so. It changed my life.

Now, some might reject this. That is okay. But most who seek the truth of the Bible are not disappointed. It truly changes lives. Admittedly, I am not perfect—and my colleagues could identify with that—but I am forgiven. I am forgiven, and every day I have a purpose beyond myself to live in a way that makes a difference because of not who I am, but who this book and my savior has made me be.

So I will end with this, Mr. Speaker, in my namesake, 2 Timothy 2:15, it says to me specifically: Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

At the end of each day, Mr. Speaker, because of this passage, I ask, first of all: Is God pleased?

Secondly, has the work been done well?

Thirdly, has the word—the truth—been used well in my life?

If I can answer in the affirmative to each of those based upon the Bible, I know for whatever reason my God has been served well, and I have done the work well.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for leading this Special Order tonight talking about something so significant as the Bible, and I pray that it imparts wisdom to all we do here.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those profound and heartfelt words that he has just shared with us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman holding this hour tonight.

In September of this year, we celebrated the 230th birthday of our Constitution, a document that has provided for the governance of this great people for 230 years.

The history behind that was that the States in 1787 decided that the Articles of Confederation were not properly forming a nation that could protect itself properly. So they sent really smart men to Philadelphia to fine-tune—or tweak—the Articles of Confederation.

James Madison and others had a different idea. They locked the doors, they went into closed session, and they came forth with a Constitution that we have lived under for the next 230 years.

Benjamin Franklin, who was the oldest Framer, emerged from that experience and was asked by a woman, whom we think was named Mrs. Powell. She said: Good Doctor, what have you given us, a monarchy or a republic?

He looked her in the eye and said: "Madam, a republic, if you can keep it."

That is a daunting phrase, Mr. Speaker, and it is one that carries forward now for 230 years. It never ends. It is not a one-and-done circumstance.

So the question arises: How, in fact, do we keep a republic?

Mr. Speaker, only a free, self-governing people can keep a republic. As was previously quoted by my colleague from Louisiana, John Adams wrote that only a moral and religious people can self-govern.

Mr. Speaker, as I look at our Nation today, I am deeply concerned that we are losing that moral high ground to be able to maintain the moral authority, in fact, to self-govern. We each say the Pledge of Allegiance often. There is a line in that pledge that says, "One nation under God," with no comma.

Mr. Speaker, think about that juxtaposition, "One nation under God."

What does God see when He sees our Nation today? What does He see in America that can, in fact, please Him?

He sees a nation that has come to accept the killing of 57 million babies in the last 44 years. He has seen a nation whose family units are breaking up and the impact it has on the moral guidance of children. He has seen a coarsening of our society, a language that is unsuitable, a filthiness and commonness that, quite frankly, offends Him at every level.

Mr. Speaker, you and others listening to me tonight, I think, have their own list of things that God looks at and cannot and simply will not bless.

How do we turn that around? How do we reclaim that moral high ground?

I am going to argue, Mr. Speaker, that that is an individual job. I don't think any of us would argue that we can legislate this work, because this is a work of each of our hearts.

Mr. Speaker, I think you reclaim this moral high ground by living a moral code. I live the Judeo-Christian model. Jesus Christ is my personal savior. I try to live his tenets every single day. Some days I am better at it than others. Each of those days, I am simply a sinner saved by grace. That grace of God has provided the story of that, and how that works is provided for us in the Bible that we celebrate tonight.

Mr. Speaker, each one of us has to live a code that, in fact, can create moral and religious people. Each of us in this body take an oath every 2 years—those of us who are fortunate to get reelected—to defend and protect the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic.

We have got good men and women in uniform tonight who are putting their lives between us and some really bad guys as a result of that oath of office.

I'm going to ask each of my colleagues here tonight to think about what they are willing to put on the line to protect and defend the Constitution, to help create that moral fiber, and to reclaim that moral high ground that

will, in fact, allow us to continue self-governance and, by extension, protect this Republic.

That used to be the easy thing to do, Mr. Speaker, but the voices against us, the voices of intolerance are growing louder and louder every single day. It will come at a risk to stand up for those Biblical truths on which this country was founded and which have sustained her for some 230 years.

□ 1900

Are you and I, in fact, willing to take those risks, take the risk of being ostracized, being ridiculed, being made fun of because we stand up for the truths that all of us know built and sustained this country?

I certainly hope we are because we have got young men and women in uniform who put their lives on the line, and I am going to ask you to put your reputation and mine on the line to help create and maintain this Republic.

As Benjamin Franklin said: "A Republic, if you can keep it." These are strong words for a strong-hearted people who must reclaim the moral high ground that God, in fact, continues to bless.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that God bless each one of us, that God continue to bless Texas, and that God bless the great United States of America.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his words and for focusing our attention on the U.S. Constitution and some other great things, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES). He won a special election and is one of our most recently elected and newest Members of Congress. I look forward to seeing him doing good things here for a long time to come.

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Colorado holding this Special Order hour tonight.

Serving my fellow Kansans for a little over the last 6 months has been a very humbling experience. I can't help but walk onto the House floor and feel the weight of history in this hall.

I am often reminded of Jesus' words in Mark chapter 9: "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all." This verse touches on why each of us should be here not for our own gain, but in service to others.

Throughout our country tonight, people are in Bible study classes. We are all attempting to seek how we humble ourselves before the Lord.

When I consider our Founding Fathers' vision for this Republic, I think they set in motion with a servant's heart. The Founders made clear that religious liberty was to be cherished, and so they enshrined it in our Constitution. From the time of the Puritans crossing the Atlantic in search of freedom to practice their faith to today, millions of Americans have taken the Bible as the cornerstone of their faith.

Our President's have chosen to take the oath of office on their Bibles. President Lincoln chose his Bible to be open to Matthew 7:1, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." President Reagan chose to have his Bible open to II Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face. . . ."

With the Bible as our guiding compass, these leaders chose to serve their fellow Americans with humility and strength.

As we honor National Bible Week, I hope that individuals across this country, regardless of their faith background, will take a moment to reflect on the gift of religious liberty and their role to serve others around them. The future of our great Nation rests in the servant hearts of her people.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I am going to mention something about fulfilled prophesy. This is one of the reasons why we can believe in and trust the Bible.

People come here to Congress with all different kinds of backgrounds, including pastors. This diversity of background adds a valuable thread of experience and thought that helps us all.

One reason many people respect the Bible is that so many prophecies for telling future events have come true exactly as foretold. In the Old Testament, there are many predictions that were given to prove that, if a speaker were divinely inspired, those things that he predicted would come true; it would validate the words of that prophesy.

The Book of Daniel, for instance, contains scores of detailed prophecies that were literally fulfilled. Skeptics have fallen back to the position that Daniel must have been written after the fact and is, therefore, not being honest.

In fact, the Book of Daniel is found in its entirety in the Greek's Septuagint and partially in the Dead Sea Scrolls, both of which we know predated the events that were prophesied. That means that the critics of the dating of the Book of Daniel are the ones who are not being honest.

The rise and fall of empires, the capture and destruction of cities, the destiny of kings all were prophesied in minute detail. Archeology and history have literally confirmed hundreds of such prophecies as having come true.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) for leading this Special Order tonight on National Bible Week.

Last night, several of us had the privilege to attend a preview of the national Museum of the Bible. It was very impressive. I would urge everybody watching tonight and who hears about it to tour it when you get the chance here in Washington, D.C.

One of the things that struck me very early on in that tour was a banner hanging inside the museum that says:

"The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing to the soul. The decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple"—Psalm 19:8.

That also applies to the Bible itself, the inherent and infallible Word of God.

Jesus himself used Scripture that was written before him. Jesus never belittled the Scripture, as some modern critics do, or set it aside, nor did he criticize it; although he criticized those who misused it or contradicted it, although he rejected many interpretations of it.

When we hear the Son of God's quotes to Scriptures, we need no further testimony. He believed every word of Scripture. All the prophecies concerning Himself were fulfilled, as my colleague, Mr. LAMBORN, said.

Time and time and time again, the timelines prove the Word of God's prophesy. Matthew 19:4 and 19:5 were one of those that Jesus spoke of, documented in the New Testament, accounts by those over there with Jesus at the time.

We know Moses wrote the Pentateuch, Jonah wrote Jonah, Daniel wrote Daniel. Jesus attests to that. He believed the Old Testament was spoken by God, Himself, written by the Holy Spirit's inspiration, even though the pen was held by men. That is an important point for those who ask: How can the Bible be real, since it was written down by men?

The committed task of all writing of the Word of God, though they were fallible men, were guided by the infallible Holy Spirit. That is a faith we have and hold.

It does take some faith, yes, just as it takes faith for me to get on that airliner and fly back East each week. But the faith in the Bible is much stronger. It has never been proven wrong. All the prophecies that were made that have occurred already have been proven true.

The Founders thought it was a key element in the founding of this Nation, obviously. Right in this room, behind the Speaker's dais, is the inscription: "In God We Trust." Facing me right now is the only forward-facing image in here of Moses looking over this House of Representatives.

Lastly, I would leave with this. As you watch the machinations of the Members of Congress, I think one of the most important guidelines we would have I find in Proverbs 4:25 through 4:27: we uphold the honor not only of this institution and our families, but those who walk with God, that walk with Jesus.

In Proverbs, you see: "Let your eyes look straight ahead. Fix your gaze directly before you. Keep straight the passage for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways. Do not turn to the right or the left. Keep your feet from evil."

That is what the Bible inspires. As I read it on the plane coming back and forth and read it at home or at my bed-

side, this is what true faith is all about, proven time and time again.

I urge everybody not just to have the Bible at your home. The statistics are that every home has 2.2 Bibles, on average. It isn't that there aren't enough Bibles. It is that people don't open it often enough.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for his sincere words.

When National Bible Week was started in 1941, even though that has only been 76 years, the Bible itself has been celebrated by Americans since the beginning of our country—in fact, before we were a country.

Our Presidents have been very vocal in their acknowledgment of the Bible and the DNA of who we are as Americans. Several have been quoted.

Listen to what Civil War hero Ulysses Grant gave as advice to Sunday school children: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of your liberties; write its precepts on your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

Then he finished with this quote from the Bible: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great privilege to celebrate National Bible Week.

As stated, it has been 76 years since President Franklin Roosevelt declared this National Bible Week. I thank Congressman LAMBORN for recognizing the importance of honoring God's Word here tonight.

Just 16 short years ago, I learned the most valuable lesson of my life. I realized I had to change my priorities. Part of that change was to put God first. A big part of that commitment was the reading and studying of His Word through prayer and meditation. It is easy to say, but difficult to do.

I had come to a point in my life where I made a covenant with God on my knees, which reminds me of God's instruction to Joshua 1:8, "This book of laws shall not depart from your lips, but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then, you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have true success."

I learned to gradually believe all the wonderful promises God made through His Word, and he credited to me His righteousness, just as He did our spiritual father Abraham in Genesis 15:6, "I learned it was not my will be done, but His will be done."

I learned what Jesus Christ had done for me and the entire world and how he leads me in all my endeavors and has called me to places I never imagined I would go. One of those is right here.

Years ago, I could never have imagined myself here tonight, speaking on

this floor in the United States House of Representatives, representing the great people of Georgia's 12th District. But here I am, by the grace of God.

In this endeavor, I meditate often, and as said in Philippians 2: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others more important than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but look to the interests of others."

At a time when many Americans are increasingly divided, I often remind myself and those around me to have faith in Him and to remember the Judeo-Christian values our Nation was founded on.

The Bible's influence on our founding documents can still be seen here today and was mentioned tonight. Again, when the Constitutional Convention reached an impasse, Ben Franklin asked clergymen to come in and pray and read the Scriptures. They united around the greatest constitutional document created in the history of mankind.

Americans are looking to Congress to come together to find solutions for rising healthcare costs, a simpler, fairer Tax Code, and let's get our good folks back to work again. It is time to put the American people's interests above political will.

The division in this Nation is real. They are evident right here in this body. How could our behavior ever show the world to believe that God sent His Son to save the world?

This is when we should look to God's provision. The truth can always be found through faith in him. Jesus summed it up when he prayed for us in John 17:21: "That all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in me and I am in You. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that You sent me."

My inspiration is found in Psalms 51:10-12, David's Prayer: "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me."

As we enter the Christmas season, one of the most important seasons of the year, we all must remember to keep His Word close and let it lead us in all that we do.

I am grateful that we have a President who actually wishes a merry Christmas as we all celebrate the birth of the Savior of the world.

God bless.

□ 1915

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for being here tonight and for those thought-provoking and very well-intended words.

As our next speaker comes to the podium, let me mention the issue of archaeology. Archaeology is one of the reasons why we can have trust in that what the Bible says is true. There are

many archaeological discoveries which have validated Biblical accounts, giving trustworthiness to the Bible that we acknowledge and commemorate during this National Bible Week.

Time and time again, archaeology has shown that Biblical personalities, locations, and events actually existed in time and space. Claims by critics that a Biblical statement was simply made up have been debunked by later archaeological studies more times than we can say.

Jewish archaeologist Nelson Glueck has said: "It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted or contradicted a Biblical reference."

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER).

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I greatly appreciate my colleague from Colorado for leading this Special Order on the Bible, its importance to each of us, and its influence on our constitutional Republic.

Our Founding Fathers understood that Biblical values were the basis for our Republic and that this country would be slowly destroyed if the people's knowledge and adherence to those values were ever lost.

In reference to this danger, John Adams wrote: "Democracy will soon degenerate into an anarchy, such an anarchy that every man will do what is right in his own eyes, and no man's life or property or reputation or liberty will be secure, and every one of these would soon mold itself into a system of subordination of all the moral virtues and intellectual abilities, all the powers of wealth, beauty, wit, and science, to the wanton pleasures, the capricious will, and abominable cruelty of one or a very few."

In a simpler language, that means "tyranny."

When Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States early in the 19th century, he wrote in "Democracy in America" that our Nation's "religious atmosphere was the first thing that struck me on arrival in the United States." He believed that adherence to the virtuous standards was indispensable for the preservation of liberty.

Mr. Speaker, he was correct in this assessment. This brings me to one of my own favorite passages in the Bible: the Apostle Paul writing to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 3:16 through 2 Timothy 4:5. And I might add that I find this passage to be more and more relevant to our times with each and every passing day.

It reads: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the Word, be ready in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires and will turn away their ears and will turn aside to myths."

"But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of the evangelist, and fulfill your ministry."

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those words. It is great that we have been hearing today from Representatives from all over the United States: from North Carolina on the Atlantic Coast in Georgia to California on the Pacific Coast, from Michigan on our Northern border to Texas on our Southern border. And we have been hearing America speak tonight, so I think that is very special.

Now, there are some who would prefer to gloss over the vital role that the Bible has had in the founding of our Nation and the implementation of this unique form of government, but none of our Founding Fathers were perfect. Indeed, there are times in our Nation's history when Biblical principles were not acted upon.

Yet, listen to what President Harry Truman said during his address to the Attorney General's conference on law enforcement problems: "The fundamental basis of this Nation's law was given to Moses on the Mount. The fundamental basis of our Bill of Rights comes from the teachings which we get from Exodus and St. Matthew, from Isaiah and St. Paul. I don't think we emphasize that enough these days."

"If we don't have the proper fundamental moral background, we will finally end up with a totalitarian government, which does not believe in rights for anybody except the State."

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor, and it has been a pleasure to commemorate National Bible Week this evening. As I said a moment ago, we heard from colleagues from all over the United States. I am grateful to these colleagues who have joined me to honor the Word of God. I am also thankful to the National Bible Association for their vision for National Bible Week and for their encouragement for our efforts today.

Mr. Speaker, the prophet Isaiah, thousands of years ago, wrote: "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God endures forever."

How true. Civilizations have risen and fallen in those thousands of years since that was said, generations have come and gone, yet here today on November 14, 2017, we are still celebrating the enduring Word of God. We celebrate National Bible Week.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday was the International Day of the Bible, and this week we are celebrating the National Bible Week across the United States.

It is very fitting that we take time today on the floor of the People's House to draw our nation's attention to the Bible. In his book

Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers, Dr. Daniel Dreisbach reminds us of the influential role the Bible served in the lives, thoughts and ideas of our nation's Founding Fathers.

The Bible was the most accessible book to our Founding Fathers and gave them insights on human nature, civic virtue, political authority, and the rights and duties of citizens that informed them as they formulated established the structures of government.

On a more personal level, I believe that the Bible is not simply an inspirational book or a comforting book—although it is that. But, I believe the Bible to be the holy word of God. It tells us the story of God's love for us. It is a story of redemption for those who would put their faith and trust in Christ alone.

John 3:16 tells us that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

For me, as a follower of Jesus Christ, this is not only comforting and inspiring but it is True and the Bible is a guide for my life.

Each day—and the older I get—I am reminded of the comforting Truth in Job Chapter 19. Written centuries before the birth, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, we were told of our redeemer. The one who would save us.

For I know that my Redeemer lives,
And He shall stand at last on the earth;
And after my skin is destroyed, this I know,
That in my flesh I shall see God,
Whom I shall see for myself,
And my eyes shall behold, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!
Job 19:25-27

This promise reminds me of the Lord's love for me—no matter what the circumstances of life.

Maybe it's been a while since you poured over the pages of the Bible. Maybe it's been collecting dust on a shelf. Take it down and read once again the truthful and comforting words of God preserved for us and given to us as a gift.

I thank my colleagues for reserving this time for me to join you in sharing what the Bible means to me and hundreds of millions of others across the world.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 0025

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) at 12 o'clock and 25 minutes a.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1, TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 17, 2017, THROUGH NOVEMBER 24, 2017

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report

(Rept. No. 115-410) on the resolution (H. Res. 619) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2018, and providing for proceedings during the period from November 17, 2017, through November 24, 2017, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1679. An act to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 26 minutes a.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until today, Wednesday, November 15, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3161. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Troy M. Shoemaker, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3162. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Listing of Color Additives Exempt From Certification; Calcium Carbonate [Docket No.: FDA-2016-C-2767] received November 13, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3163. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Ammonium Formate and Formic Acid [Docket No.: FDA-2014-F-0988] received November 13, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3164. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Central African Republic that was declared in Executive Order 13667 of May 12, 2014, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3165. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Syria that was declared in Executive Order 13338 of May 11, 2004, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3166. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting reports concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1(a) (as amended by Public Law 108-458, Sec. 7121(b)); (118 Stat. 3807); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3167. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a notification of a nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3168. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a notification of a nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3169. A letter from the Acting Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's FY 2016 Commercial and Inherently Governmental Inventories, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 501 note; Public Law 105-270, Sec. 2(c)(1)(A); (112 Stat. 2382); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3170. A letter from the Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President, transmitting a notification of a vacancy and designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3171. A letter from the Branch Chief, Endangered Species Listing, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for *Dalea carthagensis* var. *floridana* (Florida Prairie-clover), and Threatened Species Status for *Sideroxylon reclinatum* ssp. *austrofloridense* (Everglades Bully), *Digitaria pauciflora* (Florida Pineland Crabgrass), and *Chamaesyce deltoidea* ssp. *pinetorum* (Pineland Sandmat) [Docket No.: FWS-R4-ES-2016-0090; 4500030113] (RIN: 1018-BB48) received November 13, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3172. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Listing Policy and Support, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Removing Textual Descriptions of Critical Habitat Boundaries for Plants on the Hawaiian Islands [Docket No.: FWS-HQ-ES-2015-0009; 4500090023] (RIN: 1018-BA80) received November 13, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3173. A letter from the Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Migratory Bird Hunting; Approval of Corrosion-Inhibited Copper Shot as Nontoxic for Waterfowl Hunting [Docket No.: FWS-HQ-MB-2015-0073; FFO9M21200-178-FXMB1231099BPP0] (RIN: 1018-BB06) received