

Waking Up to God

³For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴But you, brethren, are not in darkness so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore, let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. 1 Thessalonians 5:3-6 (NKJV)

This passage would have been fitting for the British at Fort Ticonderoga, for on May 10, 1775, a group of brave men led by Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold claimed one of our earliest victories. These were the 'Green Mountain Boys' of Vermont, a force of only eighty-three. They overran and captured the English fortification on Lake Champlain while the sentry providentially slept, demonstrating their resolute courage and determination.

The British commander woke to Allen's demand for immediate surrender. He asked his captor in whose name he made the demand. The American patriot replied, "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress."

On May 31, 1775, three weeks after the Americans captured the fort, Harvard's president, Samuel Langdon, told the Massachusetts Provincial Congress:

If God be for us, who can be against us? ... May our land be purged from all its sins! Then the Lord will be our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, and we will have no reason to be afraid, though thousands of enemies set themselves against us.

The capture of Ft. Ticonderoga was a wake-up call. First, it woke the British. They could see that the Americans were fed up with their bullying and were determined to fight back against their tyrannical overreach.

Second, the fort's capture was a unifying moment for the Americans. At the outset of the War for Independence, America was divided. Yet, this victory rallied some Americans and awakened the indifferent citizens to the determination to throw off the enslaving chains of British oppression.

Third, the story of the American victory at the British fortress is a wake-up call for us. Ethan Allen indicated his two-fold authority for breaching the walls: Jehovah and the Continental Congress. He was subject to God and the directives of his newly forming government. He was not acting as an out-of-control rebel. He had biblical and civil obligations that we can replicate.

We acknowledge God's continual direction in our lives if we have a biblical worldview. The Green Mountain Boys did not enter the field of battle and leave God in the church building. He went with them. He will go with us into our engagements with evil. Likewise, we will follow the Constitution and the laws of the land. We don't subvert or bypass the rules; we embrace them and act within Constitutional authority.

The story of Fort Ticonderoga did not end with the American capture and occupation. The former bookstore owner, Henry Knox, led troops to the fort to appropriate cannons for the American cause.

When the war started in 1775, Knox and his wife left Boston and their bookstore to support the American struggle for liberty. Henry joined the militia and offered his knowledge and expertise. He had learned military science through extensive reading and study and was especially fond of the artillery. He helped train artillerymen for the war.

Two weeks after the Battle of Bunker Hill, on July 2, 1775, General George Washington arrived at the siege emplacements near Boston. He and the twenty-five-year-old Knox became close friends. After the capture of Ft. Ticonderoga, Knox approached the General with the idea to retrieve the cannons from Ticonderoga and Crown Point for the upcoming Boston siege.

Colonel Knox led his troops, and on December 6, 1775, they began a fifty-six-day, 300-mile trek from New York to Boston. Knox called his caravan a “Noble Train of Artillery.” Finally, on January 27, 1776, Knox brought the weapons to the American encampment on the high ground overlooking Boston. Historian Victor Brooks called Knox’s accomplishment “one of the most stupendous feats of logistics in the entire War for Independence.”

When British General Howe saw the Americans’ strategic advantage, he ordered his men to retreat. On March 17, Howe and his men boarded ships and sailed to Halifax, Nova Scotia, ending the British occupation of Boston.¹

At times, God chooses to execute His will through nature, the power of prayer, and people. In the American Revolution, two ordinary individuals, Ethan Allen and Henry Knox, were instrumental in achieving success for the American cause. They both witnessed God’s intervention in their victories. It’s important to remember that God can use anyone to fulfill His purpose, and we must be open to His guidance and awaken to His calling.

Keep The Light of Waking Up to God Burning!
GodNAmerica.com

¹ Williams, Pat, and Jim Denney. *Revolutionary Leadership*. Grand Rapids, Revell, 2021, pp. 86-98.