**Love for the King**

While David was hiding out in desert strongholds from Saul, king of Israel, he assembled a rag-tag group of outcasts and, with God’s help, transformed them into one of the greatest special forces in history. These 600 men were totally devoted to David for the rest of his life regardless of whether his fortunes were wonderful or a total disaster.

When David was being hunted by Saul, they were by his side. When David ruled in Hebron over Judah, they were there. When Saul was dead and the ten northern tribes fought to remain true to Saul’s family, David’s core group of fighters were faithful to him. Things looked great when David became king in Jerusalem of the entire nation of Israel. But these loyal warriors once again found themselves on the run when David’s son, Absalom pulled a treasonous takeover. It was because of their bravery and God’s help that they were victorious over the forces of Absalom and their beloved king was reinstated to his throne.

A touching incident illustrates just how devoted these mighty warriors were to David. While they were hiding from Saul at the cave of Adullam, the Philistines had captured David’s hometown of Bethlehem and established a garrison there. David made the mistake of commenting that he would love a drink from the well at Bethlehem’s gate. Three of his fighters overheard the comment, broke through enemy lines, drew water from the well and brought it back to David! He was appalled that his frivolous comment had placed the lives of his devoted soldiers at risk, so he offered it as a drink offering to Jehovah instead of drinking it.

David’s humility, trust in God, and love for truth, justice and mercy made him a king who was a joy to serve. For those of us who have been rescued from the domain of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of God’s dear Son (Colossians 1:13), we serve a King who is infinitely greater than David. We are called to put on His armor (Ephesians 6:10-17), prepared to fight the spiritual battles that inevitably come our way in this life. I believe the mental image of being one of Christ’s “600” is a powerful way to meditate on the blessings of serving Him.

Jesus has taken a rag-tag bunch of outcasts and made us special (Romans 5:6-8). He is good, loving, kind and merciful (Galatians 2:20). His army is assured the victory over sin and death (1 Corinthians 15:55-58). And the best part of all is that Jesus loves us and wants to live with us eternally (John 14:1-3).

The question is, can Christ count on you? “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

**John McKee**

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