

Charlemagne's renown of conquering any land based on sensational leadership and f...

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Serving as a divine representation of Christ himself, Charlemagne is exhibited as a holy, yet legendary king who is capable of conquering any land or people. Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, is explicitly known for his competent military strategies, brilliant people skills and his overall wisdom. Unaverred by two centuries of conquest, Charlemagne is absolutely idolized by the Frankish army he commands. Through his leadership, the Frankish army has been able to reap great rewards and accumulate boundless wealth for themselves, and for their kingdom. As a result, all of the Frankish soldiers show great respect and even a dedicated love for Charlemagne, therefore allowing his position and authority as king to be undisputed. In the Song of Roland, Charles the Great serves as the irrefutable king of the Frankish kingdom—an earthly representation of holy divinity who valiantly serves and protects his people from the threats of armed contenders and pagan ideologies.

In relational terms, Charlemagne expects steadfast loyalty from all his soldiers—especially his knights. The amount of battlefield responsibility awarded to a Frankish knight under Charlemagne's command was solely based upon reliability and allegiance. From a leadership point of view, if Charles the Great didn't select the most ardent individuals to command his army, the entire complex of respect and authority would wither away. Without a strong devotion to the Frankish cause, Charlemagne's army would be utterly decimated due to a lack of organization, planning and collaboration. Understandably though, this is never presented as an issue within the ranks of the Frankish army. In addition to the aspects of loyalty, Charlemagne's acute devotion to God and his calling to fight against all

forms of paganism is what truly enables his soldiers to “ not be afraid and have no terror of dying” (Roland 828)—for they willingly give their lives to God and Charlemagne.

The said loyalty of the Frankish army is displayed in its fullest form on the battlefield. Ferociously they fight in the name of Charlemagne—never yielding or showing mercy. As the pagan forces attempt to flee from the approaching Frankish army, a miracle of God prevents the sun from setting, therefore allowing the Franks to skillfully track them down. When the pagans realize they have no way of escape, many cry “ How sad that we were ever born! What a fateful day has dawned for us today! We have lost our lords and our peers; Charles, the brave, is returning with his great army.” (Roland 2146-49). This declaration of fear emphasizes the absolute power of Charlemagne as both a conqueror and as the King of the Franks. In the context of this quotation, Charles the Great is referenced as “ the brave”, constituting a sense of respect from the pagans.