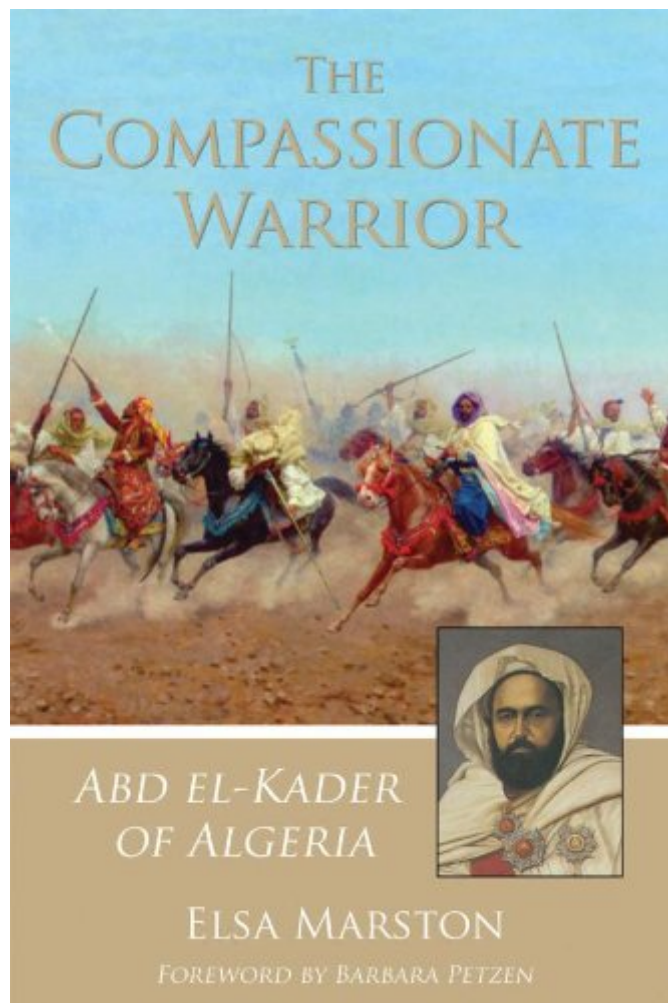




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# The Compassionate Warrior: Abd El-Kader Of Algeria



## Synopsis

A brilliant military strategist, superb horseman, statesman, philosopher, Muslim saint . . . Emir Abdel Kader (1808-1883) was an international celebrity in his own time, known for his generosity and kindness even towards enemies. Today he is recognized as one of the noblest leaders of the 19th century and a pioneer in interfaith dialogue. This fascinating biography of the heroic Arab who led the resistance to the French conquest of Algeria, endured betrayal and imprisonment, and in 1860, in Syria, saved thousands of innocent people from mob violence brings a vital message for our times.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In an age of increasing polarities between East and West, Elsa Marston brings Algerian warrior and Muslim spiritual leader Emir Abd el-Kadar to life for her readers, and does so in a way that builds bridges of understanding. Through a reasoned, honest and multi layered biography, Marston shows us a man who fights both for the independence of his people and for interfaith dialog between all

peoples. Referring to the Emir's spiritual writings, Marston says: "Abd el-kadar reminds his readers that the holy book of Islam, the Koran, explicitly states that differences are good, that God purposely created people to be different. Diversity of human communities, with differing cultures and religious ideas, is one of God's many blessings on humankind." It is a message we would all do well to remember. Thank you Elsa Marston. Debby Dahl Edwardson, author of *Blessing's Bead and My Name is Not Easy*, a National Book Award Finalist

Interesting biography of a Muslim hero and humanitarian who saved thousands of Christians during a horrendous massacre in 1860 Syria. Author Elsa Marston does an outstanding job explaining complex political situations and concepts, such as jihad. She also shows this broad slice of history from the decline of the Ottoman Empire, French and English occupation and influence in other countries, and the on-going revolution in France. I consider myself pretty knowledgeable of history, but Marston taught me much I'd never heard nor read about, not just about El-Kader of Algeria, but also about European history and how it intertwined with North Africa and Middle Eastern history during the 1800s. I recommend this book for readers in middle school through adults.

Emir Abdul Qadir is amongst humanities greatest personalities. He showed the world what Jihad really is. I have no doubt that if his life is promoted to both Muslims and non-Muslims the world will be a more harmonious place. This book is a good start.

Not long ago, I received an email from the Marketing and Publicity Coordinator of Wisdom Tales Press asking me if they could send me a complimentary copy of a children's book exchange for an honest .com review. I enjoyed it so much that I agreed to read and review another educational book from them. This review is the result of that offer. The opinions here are from me alone, not influenced by others or for any monetary exchange or benefit. I read and review books as a hobby. If you are like me, you have probably never heard of Abd El-Kader of Algeria, yet in his day (1807-1883) his accomplishments were praised by Abraham Lincoln, the Pope, Napoleon III, his countrymen and Muslims through the ages. He is known for his brilliance, organizational skills, military strategies, leadership, open-mindedness and heroic actions, but best known for his forgivingness and kindness toward his former enemies and as the pioneer in interfaith dialogue. On June 14th, 1830, France invaded Algeria with the intent of destroying their culture taking over their property and flexing their "European superior" muscles. Though hopelessly undermanned and inexperienced the Algerians fought back against overwhelming odds. Although they would inevitably

fail, at twenty-four Abd el-Kader, like his father, a man of religion and learning--a marabout--came into his own during skirmishes and became a leader of the resistance to the French invaders, fighting a holy war--jihad--strictly within Islamic law and principles and would tolerate none less from his followers--some 80,000 by 1840 at the height of the their buildup. His humane treatment documented in standards for prisoner-of-war became the model for later international conventions throughout history. On December 22, 1847, Abd el-Kader, now the Emir, agreed to lay down his sword and surrender to the French who promised to him exile to Egypt in exchange for his agreement to never return to Algeria. Would the French betray him? Was this the end of the road for the Emir? Yes and no. A series of interesting events deprived him from complete freedom; however, his letters and influence on those in leadership saved and changed lives throughout the ages and as far reaching as his name sake, Elkader, Iowa where this remarkable and heroic human being's history is being restored. The Compassionate Warrior is 142-pages of fascinating reading, that includes 14 photographs, chapter notes, a historic timeline, a glossary, a bibliography, index and biographical notes on author Elsa Marston and the Director of Middle East Connections and board member of the Abd el-Kader Education Project. I recommend this intriguing story to high school, college and adult students who are interested in reading about an unsung compassionate Muslim hero who are virtually unknown in world history classes in the annals of American education. I did not expect it, but this is a real gem. I had never heard of this important historically significant leader. I am glad I read The Compassionate Warrior and I bet you will be too. Enjoy!

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