

El Cid is an epic tale that tells of legendary warriors and kings. It was written about the year eleven hundred and has unknown author. The story centers on Ruy Diaz, more commonly known as El Cid. El Cid loses his king's respect and admiration. Exactly why El Cid lost the king's favor is not known, but his heroic struggle to regain it is well documented. He overcame the great odds placed against him and became an excellent vassal. El Cid is a perfect medieval vassal because he follows his faith, is a great leader, and shows homage to his king.

El Cid devotes his entire life to following what he feels are God's wishes. The most notable occasion where El Cid shows his devotion to his faith is in the first verse. As El Cid is being exiled he said, "I give Thee thanks, O God, our father in heaven. My wicked enemies have contrived this plot against me." This shows even in his lowest moment he still thanks God for all he has given him. El Cid shows the deepness of his faith before going into battle. He always asks God to be with him, and after he and his men win each battle El Cid always thanks God for letting it happen. He believes God let it happen, he never thought it is him.

Ruy Diaz is an extraordinary leader. He is always fearless before going into battle; he does not even consider that he might not be victorious. When El Cid is badly outnumbered his tactics and battle plans always cause him to come out the clear victor. An example where El Cid shows his superior tactics is in page 53, verse 27. El Cid was encamped in front of Alcocer for fifteen weeks. El Cid realizes that Alcocer was not going to give up without a fight so he devises a plan. He tricks the people of Alcocer to come out. El Cid began picking up parts of his camp and leaving as if he was out of reserves. The people of Alcocer fall for this trick, and they think El Cid would lose badly in battle. The people of Alcocer fall for this trick and leave thinking about all the treasures that they were going to win. However, once the people of Alcocer are a good distance from the city El Cid attacks easily defeating them. This is only one example where El Cid shows his superior leadership ability.

One major aspect of being a leader, that is usually overlooked, is having a great love for one's followers. El Cid always is looking out for his men's best interests. He is not a dictator to his men; El Cid always should they did not have to follow him into battle. El Cid only wants to achieve glory with men that were willing to fight and die for him. After the battles he gave a large amount of the treasure to his soldiers. By giving such a large amount of treasure to his men

it kept his men happy and made them more likely to follow him.

In the feudal system it is the vassal's duty to show homage to the authority above them.

El Cid does this throughout the book. While El Cid was exiled he no longer was obligated to

show respect to Alfonso, his king, but he continued to regard it as his duty.

Whenever El Cid

won a battle or receives a significant amount of riches he sent more than the king's share to him.

When El Cid returns to Burgos he shows his admiration to the king by kneeling before him and

picking grass with his teeth. This act shows King Alfonso that El Cid is below him, and it shows

how much respect El Cid has for Alfonso.

The story of El Cid is an inspirational tale of a person overcoming the odds placed

against him. Most people would not have acted as honorably as El Cid when done such an

injustice. However, El Cid overcame these obstacles by having faith, being a leader, and

showing respect to his king. For these reasons El Cid is a classic novel not just in Spain but

throughout the entire world.

