Emir Abd el-Kader: 
A Muslim Hero & Teacher 
for Our Time

LESSON THREE: 
Captivity in France

Presentation Content, Post-Presentation Questions and Activities
This lesson describes the five years during which Abd el-Kader and his followers were held captive in France, first in Toloun and then in the royal châteaus of Pau and Amboise. When Abd el-Kader lay down his arms, he was promised by the French that he would be allowed to re-settle in the Middle East. While that promise was broken repeatedly over the next few years, he was able to make the best of his stay in France and used his time to build bridges.

Content Focus and Themes
History of France, Colonialism, Inter-cultural Relationships, Religious Pluralism

Guiding Questions

- Was Abd el-Kader naïve in trusting the French to deliver him into exile, or simply a victim of unforeseeable circumstances in France?
- What were the reasons that kept French authorities from honoring their pledge?
- How did Abd el-Kader and his followers spend their time in France?
- What meanings of jihad did Abd el-Kader live out during this period of his life?
- What do you think of the French treatment of Abd el-Kader during the five years of captivity there?
- How did Abd el-Kader’s presence in France change his view of the French and their view of him?
Learning Objectives
After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain why the French government failed to honor its pledge to send Abd el-Kader to the Middle East.
- Describe the activities that Abd el-Kader devoted himself to while in France.
- Discuss reasons why Abd el-Kader came to be admired by many in France.
- Explain how Abd el-Kader’s experience in France prepared him to be an advocate for better relationships between Europe and the Muslim world.

Common Core State Standards
This lesson helps students meet the following Common Core Standards in the sections specified.

Vocabulary Questions
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

Analysis Questions
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Response questions
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.
Lesson Three Presentation Content: Captivity in France

The following presentation notes are designed to explain the subject matter on each respective slide when delivering the digital presentation that accompanies this curriculum. When relevant to the topic discussed with each slide, we provide references to corresponding pages in Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader by John W. Kiser.

“You knew Abd el-Kader in prosperity, when practically all Algeria recognized his authority and now you will find him even greater in adversity than prosperity . . . . He never complains for himself, though he is determined to hold France to its word. He forgives his enemies, even those who can still make him suffer and he will not let anyone to speak ill of them in his presence. . . . ”

~ General Daumas’s description of the Emir to Bishop Dupuch before his visit to see him.

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Slide #25: Part Three: Captivity in France

• Now, in keeping with the terms of ending the war, Abd el-Kader prepared to depart Algeria with the knowledge that he would never see it again.

• It must have been a painful realization for a man who had risked his life and family to defend his homeland.

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Slide #26: Departure from Algeria

• On Christmas morning, 1847, Abd el-Kader, with over 100 family and followers, including some Europeans who had chosen to go into exile with him, departed from Algeria for the last time (John W. Kiser, Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader, 199-200).

• On the beach of Mers el Kabir, a solemn crowd pressed around the Emir and his followers as they prepared to depart. Those close enough snatched up his black woolen burnoose to kiss. Women wailed a mourning cry. Even French soldiers sought souvenirs from the Emir.

• Then Abd el-Kader, to his astonishment, saw a familiar French face emerge from the crowd. It was Abbé Suchet, a priest and assistant to Bishop Dupuch of Algiers. Suchet and Abd el-Kader had become friends at the time of a release of French prisoners six years before. The priest conveyed the bishop’s gratitude that the Emir had decided to end the suffering on both sides. Abd el-Kader and Suchet embraced, and the Emir gave the French priest his turban.

• After a rough voyage the exiles arrived at the French port of Toulon, assured that it would be but a temporary stop while preparations were being made for them to continue on to the Middle East. Once at the port, however, they found no signs that the ship was being readied for departure.
Slide #27: A Parliament Divided

- The French parliament was seriously divided over the terms negotiated by Lamoricière; he was already viewed by his detractors as an “Arab lover” for his humane treatment and good relations with the Arab tribes.

- In Feb., 1848, two months after having taken the Emir into custody, he addressed the Chambers of Deputies in Paris to defend his actions. He explains that the Emir had abdicated voluntarily, and that he was a man of principle: “Abd el-Kader is the embodiment of a principle – that of great religious affection . . . Religion has the same force as, once, did the principle of legitimacy in France.”

- His words were met with lukewarm applause and angry outbursts from some of the members: “A representative of France should never have accepted conditions from the Emir . . . He should be treated as a prisoner of war, a defeated enemy” (Kiser, 5).

- The popular press stoked outrage over the promise to set the Emir free in a Middle Eastern country, claiming that once there he would pose a threat to France and Europe.

- So while the French King Louis Philippe wanted to honor the promise made to the Emir to relocate him and his party to Egypt or Syria, he was an unpopular and weak ruler and those promises fell prey to French politics.

Slide #28: Toulon: Guests or Prisoners?

- After ten days, Abd el-Kader and his followers were taken to a fort near Toulon. Although orders were given that they should be treated “as guests, not as prisoners,” they were clearly captives.

- When Abd el-Kader pressed for news on their departure, he was met with evasive answers. No one even among the French knew when—or whether—the Emir and his entourage would be released to complete their journey. Yet Abd el-Kader assured his followers that he continued to trust the word of the French.

- In the meantime, he organized his life and that of his companions around study and prayer. He saw to it that everyone performed the five daily prayers required of every Muslim and spent much of the time instructing them in religion and conversing with those closest to him on points of Islamic law or the interpretation of the Qur’an (Kiser, 202-204).

Slide #29: Betrayal

- The French government found itself in a dilemma. If it failed to honor the pledge made to the Emir, it would be publicly shamed, and its enemies—particularly England—might make use of the failure to undermine France’s international credibility. On the other hand, they were afraid of public opinion in France which fiercely opposed setting Abd el-Kader free in the Middle East where they feared he would be a threat to France once again.
Finally, French officials hit upon what they hoped would be a solution: they would persuade the Emir to stay in France and adopt it as his country, releasing the government from its promise to transport him to the Middle East, thus both saving French honor and appeasing public opinion (Kiser, 205-207).

The government selected Lieutenant General Eugene Daumas, who had known Abd el-Kader in Algeria, for this task. Abd el-Kader embraced the French officer as an old friend but adamantly refused his suggestion to make France his home, saying that he would hold France to its word.

He responded angrily to Daumas, “Are we to remain in France? We do not speak your language. Our customs, our laws and religion are not yours. Our clothes, everything about us, are made the subject of mockery. Do you understand this is a death sentence?” (Kiser, 207).

Abd el-Kader could not believe that the French government had failed to keep its promise. He refused to make further excursions outside the fort, irritated by the stares of passersby, and lest the government think he enjoyed such honors.

Daumas had suggested that Abd el-Kader write directly and appeal to the French king for justice. But whether or not King Louis-Philippe wanted to honor France’s pledge to the Emir, his rule was abruptly cut short in late February when a mass riot in Paris forced him to abdicate and flee to England.

France was declared a republic leaving Abd el-Kader bewildered by the sudden political change in the country. In the midst of this turmoil, his only hope was that some Frenchmen continued to press the government to honor its commitment.

He wrote once again, pleading for justice, this time to the new five-member head of the Republican government. He included his personal oath “henceforth to never provoke trouble for the French people,” invoking the names of God and the prophets Muhammad, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and the Torah, Gospels and Qur’an (Kiser, 215-216).

But on March 30, General Changarnier, a former opponent, stopped by at Toulon to give him the bad news; the new republican government could not afford to release him at a time of instability, and had declared that it was not bound by any promises made by the former government. It would keep Abd el-Kader as a prisoner for the foreseeable future.

Stunned by the bad news, which he considered a final betrayal, Abd el-Kader steeled himself and his companions to wait, continuing their life of study and prayer.

Now the Emir, with his followers, was facing the greater jihad—to maintain his equanimity in the face of repeated disappointment and calamity and to continue to show charity and compassion not only for his followers but also for the French who had betrayed him.
Slide #31: Pau: Prison with a View

• After three months it became clear that the Emir’s sojourn in France would last some time, so the government decided to remove him and his followers from the fort in Toulon to a supposedly more comfortable location farther from the coast—for some still feared the Arab leader might try to escape.

• Alphonse de Lamartine, a famous poet in charge of foreign affairs for the new republic, decided to send the Arabs to a château in Pau near the Spanish border. De Lamartine boasted that the magnificent but old and drafty structure had a spectacular view of the Pyrenees. It was also the birthplace of the great French king Henry IV, ancestor of the Bourbon dynasty. Yet it was still a prison and the government even had iron bars installed in the windows (Kiser, 221-224).

• As soon as they learned of it, many residents of Pau protested the move, objecting to having Arab “barbarians” lodged in a building of such historical importance, which, moreover, the town had just recently restored at considerable expense.

• Many others, however, showed sympathy and even admiration for the Emir. Admirers started showing up at the château in such numbers that Abd el-Kader had to request that visits be confined to two days a week to allow him time for his family, prayer and writing. The Emir became the center of a cult of sorts; everyone who met him left admiring his outward serenity, his erudition, and his spirited, often playful conversation (Kiser, 230-231).

• Nonetheless, Pau was still a prison and to make matters worse, his friend and minder Daumas who had spent the last three months with him was to be replaced by the young Baron Esteve de Boissonnet. While his minders’ role was to convey information to the government about the Emir’s actions and conversations, they soon were charmed by him themselves, and ultimately became advocates for his freedom.

Slide #32: France’s House Aflame

• In June 1848, political chaos once again enveloped France as the government closed the National Workshops, public works that had provided employment for many in an economic crisis that had occurred the previous year.

• When the laid off workers rose in revolt in what became known as the June Days Uprising, some 3,000 were massacred and 12,000 were arrested by the republican government, resulting in the three bloodiest days in France’s history.

• Heading the effort and using tactics he had learned in Algeria was Abd el-Kader’s old adversary, General Cavaignac. This tragedy lead to a deepening divide in France between workers and the middle and upper classes (Kiser, 232).

• Despite the political turmoil, Abd el-Kader never gave up hope that France might finally fulfill its promise to him. In July, Abd el-Kader wrote to General Lamoricière, now Minister of War, reminding him of the solemn promise he had made to him when he surrendered. When Lamoricière did not respond, Abd el-Kader realized that he had greater issues to worry about.

• However, concerned that the British might send a raiding party across the Spanish border to liberate his former opponent, Lamoricière ordered the Emir and his immediate family moved to a great château at Amboise near Paris. Abd el-Kader offered his followers the opportunity to return to Algeria, but they rejected his offer, refusing to leave their leader in his suffering (Kiser, 234).
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Slide #33: Château d’Amboise: A Royal Prison

- While he had only spent six months in Pau, the day he left for his new quarters, a crowd pressed around the château, hoping to catch a glimpse of him; the townspeople’s hostility had long since dissipated, and he had become a heroic figure with countless well-wishers. Abd el-Kader in turn expressed his appreciation for the kindness he had experienced by leaving charity with the local priest for the poor and a small gift for a helpful handyman (Kiser, 238).

- Their journey to Amboise in November, 1848 took on the tone of a royal procession with enthusiastic crowds of well-wishers greeting him at every stop. When he found himself cheered in Bordeaux, flanked by Bishop Dupuch and the archbishop of Bordeaux, Abd el-Kader at first modestly assumed the cheers were for his clerical companions. The mayor of Amboise even organized a banquet for him, but Abd el-Kader chose not to attend, lest he appear to be enjoying his captivity.

- The new residence was near Paris where decisions could be made about the Emir’s fate; it was also far from the coast, as some in France still worried about the possibility of him trying to escape.

- Captain Boissonnet tried to make them as comfortable as possible in their new residence. The château at Amboise was larger than that at Pau and had recently been restored by the Orleans branch of the Bourbons to whom it belonged.

- Despite the spacious gardens and open views, restrictions on the prisoners were greater at Amboise; visitors were only allowed if authorized by General Lamoricière, the Emir’s former supporter. Abd el-Kader was also prohibited from sending or receiving letters without permission. The group was guarded by 200 soldiers, more than the barracks could accommodate.

- The people of Amboise, however, took their Arab “guests” to their hearts, offering gifts and supplies to supplement what the War Ministry provided the captives. Captain Boissonnet also did whatever he could to ease the prisoners’ conditions.

- Abd el-Kader and his group were to spend the next four years at Château d’Amboise, the greater part of their captivity in France.

Slide #34: Dashed Hopes

- While there were still many in France who viewed him negatively, those who interacted with him or came to hear about his many endearing and unique qualities came to respect and admire him, forming a powerful lobby of “Kaderians.”

- Chief among them was Bishop Dupuch, one of the few allowed to visit the Emir under Lamoricière’s regime, who wrote an admiring pamphlet about Abd el-Kader, urging his release.

- When the French republic held a presidential election in December, 1848, the Emir unexpectedly found himself among the candidates when the citizens of Bordeaux, impressed by his manners and character, submitted enough signatures for his name to be placed on the ballot! (He did not campaign for himself.)

- The winner, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, wanted to honor the pledge that had been made to Abd el-Kader. In January, 1849, he held a meeting of his cabinet to discuss the Emir’s case. But the new Minister of War, General Ruhlière, vehemently opposed releasing the Arab leader at a time when the French military presence in Algeria had been reduced to 30,000 troops, and many colonists were returning home.
• Admiration for the Emir was not universal, and many blamed him, albeit wrongly, for the slaughter of French prisoners before his surrender. The new president was too insecure in his position to oppose his war minister or press the issue.

• Disappointed once again, Abd el-Kader meditated on the figure of Abraham, the father of the three faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. He wrote of having a vision of this patriarch: “I saw Abraham, and I am one of his children that most resemble him.” This “blessing of Abraham,” as he called it, gave him a mission to fulfill—“to be the sign of the oneness of God, the merciful, patient, and loving God for all people” (Kiser, 243).

• He wanted not only to help France (and Europe) understand Islam, but also to help Europeans rediscover the spiritual riches of their own traditions that, especially in France, were being undermined by a growing secular outlook.

### Slide #35: Learning Mutual Respect

• Abd el-Kader had become renowned in France for his piety and patience and had made friends with many notable Europeans; he in turn began to change his perception of the French as he interacted with and came to know them.

• Initially, Abd el-Kader had viewed the French as being similar to the Crusaders, non-Muslims trying to steal Muslim land and attack the Muslim faith. However, even during the war, as Abd el-Kader got to know French people as soldiers, prisoners of war, negotiators, and even as friends (as with Abbé Suchet), he began to see their humanity. He insisted on humane treatment of French prisoners of war.

• During the years of his captivity Abd el-Kader’s understanding of France and its culture continued to grow as he became acquainted with his many French visitors and admirers; these included many notables, such as Gustave Flaubert, author Victor Hugo, Napoleon’s brother Jerome, and the Duke of Aumale. He became ever more convinced that the East and West had much to learn and share.

• In 1848, he had complained that France was so alien, its religion, customs, food, and clothes so different from those he and his followers knew that they could not survive in this foreign environment; four years later in 1852 he was comfortable enjoying an opera in Paris in the company of the French president Louis-Bonaparte.

• He was likewise comfortable in the company of many French people of all classes. He was particularly grateful to two French nuns, Natalie and Saint-Maurice, whom Bishop Dupuch had assigned to care for the women and the children at the château. He described Natalie as “a lady of deep piety, a shining mirror of goodness made from the purest mother of pearl, a marabout known for her noble feelings” and praised in particular her “deep attachment to her religion.”

• Abd el-Kader could recognize true religious devotion, no matter what faith its owner professed. And the Catholic nuns reciprocated; Sister Natalie wrote that “allowing for certain exceptions of a theological nature, there is no Christian virtue that Abd el-Kader does not practice in the highest degree” (Kiser, 262).
Slide #36: The Toll of Captivity

- As admired as he was by many, and as magnificent as Château Amboise was, it was still a prison; life was hard there, especially for the children, despite the nuns’ ministrations.

- Abd el-Kader saw many of his followers, including some of his own children, fall sick and die, stricken by the damp climate in the château and the difficult conditions of their imprisonment. In all, 25 new graves marked the grounds of the Emir’s residence.

- In a last attempt to convince the Emir to change his mind and make France his adopted home, General Bugeaud visited him from the War Ministry to entice him with the idea of his own estate with, fields for cultivation, and hunting—all of which would relieve his children and companions from the boredom and inactivity that was partly responsible for their poor health.

- But Abd el-Kader would have none of it and responded, “I will not release you from your word . . . I would rather die for your dishonor than to give back your word” (Kiser, 246).

Slide #37: Freedom

- Pressure for the Algerians’ freedom was growing in France and throughout Europe. Bishop Dupuch, one of the few people allowed to visit the Emir wrote a pamphlet describing Abd el-Kader’s generous character and providing examples, such as the prisoner release during the war, which illustrated that he was a man of his word.

- Abd el-Kader had become known for his politeness, his love of learning and curiosity about France, his piety and patience, stoicism, humor, ability to empathize and forgive, and his unyielding determination to hold France to its word while working to keep up the morale and loyalty of his entourage.

- Several high profile figures both in France and internationally called attention to his fate. Noted English writer William Thackeray composed an elegy, “The Caged Hawk,” in his honor and English public opinion had turned solidly in favor of the Emir.

- Louis-Napoleon, still in a precarious political position was eager to resolve the issue but moved cautiously. In 1851, the French ruler tested public opinion by releasing 19 of the Algerians imprisoned with the Emir. Most of them returned to Algeria. There was no public outcry.

- Even so, it was not until October 16, 1852 that the now Emperor Louis-Napoleon paid a personal call to Abd el-Kader at Amboise to announce that France’s promise to him and his companions would finally be fulfilled. He dramatically announced, “I have come to give you your freedom.”

- He informed Abd el-Kader that he would be granted “a pension worthy of (his) former rank” in return for his oath that he would never interfere in Algeria again, and apologized that “for a long time I have been chagrined by your imprisonment, for it has been a constant reminder that my predecessor government had failed to keep its commitments to an enemy caught in the grip of misfortune” (Kiser, 254).

- After five years of captivity in France, Abd el-Kader was finally free to travel to the Middle East.
Comprehension Questions
Questions about the text associated with each slide specified.

Departure from Algeria
1. When were Abd el-Kader and his followers exiled from Algeria?
2. Where did Abd el-Kader and his followers expect to go after his surrender?

A Parliament Divided
3. Why were some members of the parliament and French public upset about the terms negotiated by Lamoricière that would have allowed the Emir to travel to a Muslim country?
4. What were their specific grievances with the agreement?

Toulon: Guests or Prisoners?
5. Where was Abd el-Kader and his followers taken ten days after their arrival?
6. How did he and his followers spend their time while they waited for news of their freedom?
7. What dilemma did the French government face regarding the promise they had made to Abd el-Kader?
8. How did the French government try to get out of the pledge made to Abd el-Kader?
9. What was the result? Why did Abd el-Kader refuse the French suggestion?

Bad News
10. How did the change in the French government affect Abd el-Kader’s situation?
11. How did he cope with this new betrayal?

Pau: Prison with a View
12. What type of a “prison” was the Pau château?
13. How did local residents initially respond to the new residents of Pau?
14. Why did Abd el-Kader become something of a celebrity with some people in France?

France’s House Aflame
15. What sparked new political turmoil in France in 1848?
16. Why do you think Lamoricière failed to honor his word when he became minister of war?
17. Why did the French government decide to move Abd el-Kader closer to Paris?

Château d’Amboise: A Royal Prison
18. How did the residents of Pau respond to his departure?
19. How did people respond to Abd el-Kader en route to Amboise and why?
20. How was his new residence better than the previous one?
21. What new restrictions were place on the prisoners at Château d’Amboise?
Dashed Hopes
22. What about the Emir impressed some citizens of Bordeaux enough for them to place his name on the presidential ballot?
23. What new reason did the new Minister of War cite to oppose freeing Abd el-Kader?
24. What attitudes did different segments of the French public show towards Abd el-Kader and why?
25. How did Abd el-Kader see himself as related to the figure of Abraham?

Learning Mutual Respect
26. Why did many French admire and befriend Abd el-Kader?
27. How did Abd el-Kader’s view of the French also change both during the war and during his stay in France?

The Toll of Captivity
28. Despite the help of well wishers, how did the years of captivity take their toll on Abd el-Kader’s family and followers?
29. What did General Bugeaud attempt to entice Abd el-Kader with and how did he respond?

Freedom
30. What were some of the good qualities which Abd el-Kader became known and respected for by many in France?
31. What led to Abd el-Kader’s eventual release?
32. Who personally informed him of the decision?

Vocabulary Questions
1. Define the following terms used in this lesson:
   a. Entourage
   b. Equanimity
   c. Vociferous
   d. Patriarch
   e. Elegy
2. For each of these terms, identify a substitute word with a similar meaning. Do the words convey exactly the same meaning? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions
1. How well did the French government deal with the dilemma posed by the pledge made to Abd el-Kader? Do you think they should have acted differently?
2. Do governments today face similar dilemmas? Give an example of a similar situation in contemporary times.
3. Why do you think the war ministry put him in places of great cultural significance, similar to Mt Vernon or Monticello in the United States?
4. If you and your family were held captive for five years, how would you spend your time? How would you feel towards your captors when you were finally released?
5. How did his previous experience in captivity by Bey Hassan and the forbearance showed by his father in response to that experience provide Abd el-Kader with an example of how to behave under adversity?
Analysis Questions

1. Abd el-Kader’s hopes that he would be released by the French were repeatedly dashed. Referring to the following narratives from the lesson, respond to the questions below:

   From the text for Slide 30: “Finally, Daumas had to admit to Abd el-Kader that the government had decided to renege on its promise. The Algerian was shocked and crestfallen. At Daumas’ suggestion, he wrote a letter to the king pleading his case.”

   From the text from Slide 31: “Abd el-Kader was stunned when Daumas once again brought him the bad news. He considered it a final betrayal. His only hope, a slim one, was that some Frenchmen continued to press the government to honor its promises.”

   a. What do these accounts tell us about Abd el-Kader’s faith in the French government?
   b. What words convey his reaction?
   c. What does this indicate about his character?
   d. Why do you think he continued to hold on to hope?

2. What are some of the activities that Abd el-Kader engaged in while captive in France? What does that tell you about his personality and interests?

3. How did Abd el-Kader’s view of the French and the French view of him change during this period? Is this a common occurrence between those who are previously enemies?

Response Questions

In groups of two or more discuss and respond to the following questions.

1. Responding to the news brought to him by his friend Daumas that the new government would not honor the promise to release him, Abd el-Kader pleads, “Are we to remain in France? We do not speak your language. Our customs, our laws and religion are not yours. Our clothes, everything about us, are made the subject of mockery. Do you understand this is a death sentence?” (Kiser, 207).

   a. What are the main objections he has to remaining in France?
   b. He says, “Our clothes, everything about us, are made the subject of mockery?” How might his experience be similar to that of Muslims in the West today? How was it different?
   c. Do you think he means it literally when he refers to staying in France as a “death sentence?”
   d. Do you think he would have had the same attitude if he had moved there voluntarily?

2. Abd el-Kader later sends a letter to the new French government with the following text: “Praise to One God, alone whose empire is eternal. . . . I rejoiced at the news of this new form of government because I had read in books that this republican government by its nature seeks to eliminate injustice and to prevent the strong from abusing the weak, considers all men brothers and avoids the errors that arise when a single person decides. You are generous men and desire the good of all people. Therefore, I consider you as my natural protectors” (Kiser, 215).

   a. How is he using the French’s own values to argue for his release?
   b. Considering that these were the very people he had fought against for fifteen years, do you think he is sincere in his characterization of both the government and the people as “generous men” who “desire the good of all people”? Why or why not?
   c. As a French government official reading this letter, how would you feel? How would you respond?
3. Abd el-Kader concludes the above letter with a personal oath: “Glory be to God Alone! I declare from henceforth to never provoke trouble for the French people, whether in person, or by letters, or by any other means. I make this oath before God, Mohammed – praise be to him – before Abraham, Moses and Jesus Christ; by the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran. I make this oath with my heart as well as my hand and my tongue. . . . . .” (Kiser, 215).
   a. What is his goal in this oath?
   b. How does he go about achieving this goal?
   c. Why do you think he chooses to mention previous prophets and scriptures?
   d. Was this oath surprising to you and why?

Test Questions
(Answers on page 16)

1. When Abd el-Kader and his party leave Algeria, they believe they are going into exile in:
   a. France
   b. Germany
   c. India
   d. The Middle East

2. Instead, they are taken to:
   a. France
   b. Germany
   c. India
   d. The Middle East

3. The reason the French renege on their promise to Abd el-Kader was their fear that if he was released to a Muslim country he would pose a threat to France. True or false?

4. After ten days, Abd el-Kader and his followers were taken to a fort near Toulon, where he focuses on:
   a. Learning French
   b. Preparing to fight
   c. Study and prayer
   d. All of the above

5. When French officials try to persuade the Emir to stay in France and adopt it as his country, Abd el-Kader agrees. True or false?

6. King Louis-Philippe wanted to honor the pledge made to the Emir; but he was overthrown and the new government declared that:
   a. Abd el-Kader was now free
   b. It was not bound by promises made by the former government
   c. Abd el-Kader’s family was free
   d. None of the above
7. Eventually Abd el-Kader was taken to Château d’Amboise, which is near:
   a. Paris
   b. Marseille
   c. Venice
   d. None of the above

8. Disappointed with his continued captivity, he saw a vision of and found solace in the figure of:
   a. Abraham
   b. Moses
   c. Noah
   d. Muhammad

9. Over time, Abd el-Kader came to believe that the East and West had little in common. True or false?

10. After five years of captivity, the new French ruler, Louis-Napoleon, finally freed Abd el-Kader and his party in the year:
    a. 1848
    b. 1852
    c. 1860
    d. 1873

Activities
All activities can be completed individually or in small groups.

1. Imagine that you are a member of Abd el-Kader’s party in exile in France. You are keeping a diary to remember this challenging experience in your life. Write diary entries for the different stages of exile, beginning with the journey from Algeria to France and including the different places of captivity. Speaking through the voice of the writer in the first person, include observations about your place of residence, the challenges of adapting to a new climate and environment, and your daily activities. (Refer to the description of a typical day on page 204 of John Kiser’s work, Commander of the Faithful.) Describe the major events and reasons for optimism and disappointment, as well as your reaction to the news that you will finally be freed from exile. Illustrate your diary with drawings and self-portraits. Read sections of the diary to the class.

2. Draw or paint a representation of Abd el-Kader and his family in their daily life at Château d’Amboise. Include portrayals of the various activities described in Kiser’s book on page 204.

3. Using the chapter titled “Betrayal” in Kiser’s book as a reference, write a narrative of the different positions of people in the French government or press arguing for and against the release of the Abd el-Kader. Include the role of the Emir arguing for his own release. Write out the scripts for each character and as a group, act out the debate. Have the class vote for the position that they agree with.

Answers to test questions:
1) d; 2) a; 3) true; 4) c; 5) false; 6) b; 7) a; 8) a; 9) false; 10) b.
Supplemental Film Content

In this section of the curriculum we provide recommendations or links to films that relate to the topics or themes discussed in this lesson. These films vary from full length documentaries, to short form documentaries or clips taken from full length documentaries. Each of the film names or links is accompanied by a brief description of the film. Select films also include discussion questions.

Topics and Related Films

**Abrahamic Traditions: Shared Beliefs and Practices**

*Three Faiths, One God: Judaism, Christianity, Islam* (2009), PBS.

According to the film website for *Three Faiths, One God*, this film “comparing similarities and differences in religious beliefs and practices that Islam has with Christianity and Judaism. It also examines how people of goodwill in the Abrahamic faith communities are coming to terms with historical conflicts that impact their lives today, the crisis of the fundamentalist approach to religious pluralism, and tearing down barriers to understanding and respect.”

**Questions about the film:**

1. What are some of the similarities between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam that are mentioned in this film clip?
2. What are some verses of scripture mentioned from these different faith traditions which call for religious pluralism and understanding between faiths?
3. What does the Rev. John B. Chance say about the opening chapter of the Qur’an and its similarity to the Lord’s Prayer in Christianity?

**Further Resources:** For more information, visit the *Three Faiths, One God* website.


In this film, Ghanaian reggae star, Rocky Dawuni walks the streets of Jerusalem interacting with the Muslims, Jews, and Christians who live in this sacred city. This film is a tribute to the ancient holy city of Jerusalem that also shows respect to each of the faith groups who make up its population today.

**Questions about the film:**

1. How does this video visually convey the shared experiences of the different faith communities who live in Jerusalem?
2. What are the commonalities you see between the faiths in this video? What are the differences?
Additional Teacher Resources

Books

Articles

Websites
*abdelkaderproject.org*: “Starting in Iowa, the project is growing a worldwide movement to revive the legacy of Emir Abd el-kader. Our goal is to restore the historical memory of a remarkable human being whose importance today is greater than ever. He was also an Arab warrior-scholar-statesman respected and admired from the Missouri Territory to Moscow to Mecca. When he died in 1883, the New York Times wrote, he ‘deserved to be counted among the few great men of the century.’” The Abd el-Kader project also features an annual essay contest featuring six scholarships for winning essays from students in high school and college.

*truejihad.com*: As this website about Abd el-Kader states, “History, according to the truism, is written by the victors. Yet, it was the French victors who paid homage to the moral, intellectual, and spiritual qualities that made Abd el- Kader a widely recognized ‘great man’ of the mid 19th century. Emir Abd el-Kader inspired respect from Missouri to Moscow. His story is about many things, but ultimately it is about struggle: struggle against French invaders, struggle with Arabs who rejected his leadership, struggle with depression and despair in French prisons, struggle to live as a good Muslim. Today, he would be dismissed by many in the West as a ‘fundamentalist’—a label signifying to the secularist a retrograde, narrow-minded extremist. He was indeed a fundamentalist in this sense: to be rightly guided meant only one thing for him—to do God’s will according to the teaching of the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet. He was also a man of great intellectual curiosity, marked by Greek thought, who squared his faith with a deep humanity and a progressive belief in the value of knowledge to improve lives. For him there was no contradiction between faith and reason, or between a rigid orthodoxy and acknowledging the diversity of God’s ways. Nor was there a contradiction between being a puritanical, Law-abiding Muslim and a compassionate humanitarian who respected the accomplishments of European culture.”

*Change the Story*: “Huge numbers of Americans profess to having little knowledge of Islam despite the fact that there may be as many as five million Muslims living in the U.S. Change-TheStory.net is an on-line resource aimed at transforming harmful stereotypes about Muslims that persist in society. The site offers an interactive experience where users—Muslim and non-Muslim alike—can meet their neighbors, learn about Islam and apply techniques of interfaith dialogue and action to local communities. Here you will find tools and helpful information for educators, religious leaders and individuals concerned about building bridges of understanding across lines of faith and culture.”