

## *Son of Charlemagne* Reading Rainbow Example

*Son of Charlemagne* is a book about Charlemagne, also known as King Charles I. Charlemagne leads many campaigns to gain the lands around him in the name of Christianity. His second-oldest son, Carl, is to become his heir, and his two youngest sons, Lewis and Pepin, are each anointed and given their own kingdoms at a very young age. This leaves King Charles' first son, nicknamed "Gobbo" for his hunch-back, as a cast-out among his own family.

This book follows Carl as he moves from a young boy into a seasoned warrior. As the story begins, Carl's family makes a journey across the Alps and has an unexpected meeting with the Pope that changes the entire course of their family's lives. After he watches his father make a difficult military decision in retaliation against the Saxon warriors, he struggles to understand his father's seemingly ruthless leadership. He begins to learn, though, what it means to be a ruler, and how he might follow in his father's footsteps and serve both God and Europe. Through many adventures and trials, Carl is prepared to take on great responsibilities one day, even when it means turning over someone he loves to protect his father and king.

I really enjoyed this book because it brought to life the hardships that were faced by this great ruler. Even though my husband can trace his lineage all the way back to Charlemagne, I had never thought about him as a real person, with thoughts, feelings, and kids who loved him. I have heard it said that King Charles is perhaps the greatest king to ever rule an earthly kingdom, and now I understand why! If you love stories of medieval Europe, I challenge you to read this wonderful piece of historical fiction and see what it would have been like to grow up as a child of a great king!