



# **The Middle Ages**

**Humanities 8**

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Unsplash;  
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# What Were the Middle Ages?

The Middle Ages took place after the fall of Rome in 476CE, and lasted roughly 1000 years until the 14th century. The Middle Ages had knights, kings, peasants, nobles, and popes. The Middle Ages is also called the dark ages because of the Black Death or the plague. After the fall of Rome, a political and social system emerged called the feudal system.

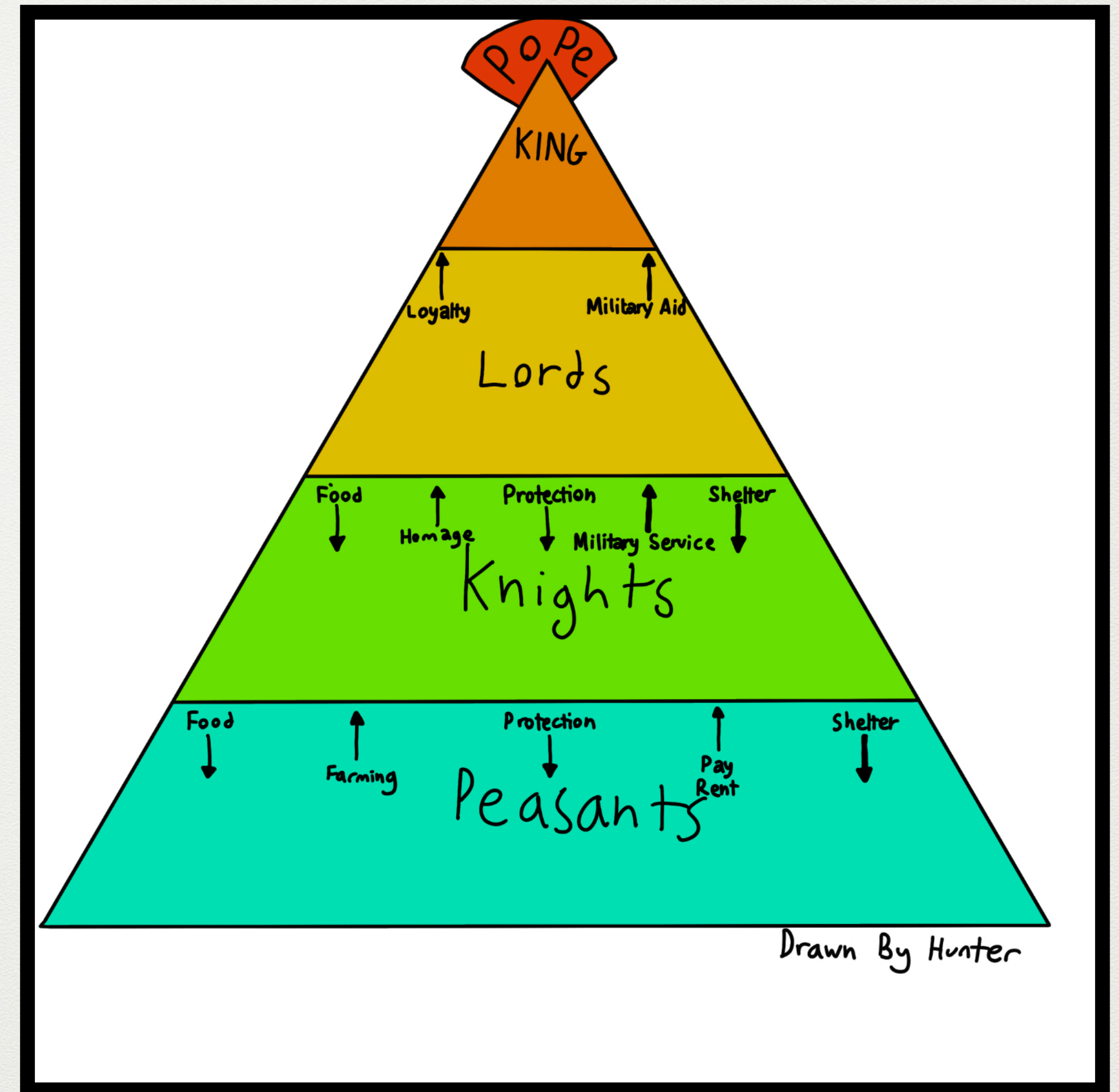


Unsplash: George Hiles

# What is the Feudal System?

The feudal system is a system where lower ranks get land and protection from higher ranks and in return they give money, work, and military service.

The feudal system had roots in the Roman manorial system and took place in Europe. The feudal system didn't make the dark ages better and life for peasants was very hard. Over the next 5 slides, I will explain what each rank is and more on how it worked.





# The Feudal System

Unsplash: Richard Clark



Unsplash: Maria Teneva

## PEASANTS

Peasants are at the bottom of the pyramid, they had difficult, brutal lives.

Peasants got shelter, protection, and food from knights and lords and in return, they worked under strict conditions, paid rent, and farmed crops.

Peasants built their own house out of wood and thatched roofs, this made their houses vulnerable to rodents and fleas that carried the plague.

Peasants gave 10% of their earnings to the church, this could also be food or goods. Peasants woke up early, worked till 3, and struggled to survive.



Unsplash: Cas Holmes

# KNIGHTS

Knights are above peasants on the feudal system. Knights received farmed crops, and rent from the peasants, and shelter, protection, and food, from lords. Knights gave, protection, food, and shelter, to peasants, and military service, and homage, to lords. Knights protected their king and Madge sure their kingdom didn't get breached. Knights live in castles or Manor houses. Knights didn't own their houses, but instead got given shelter by lords.



Unsplash: Mr Xerty

## LORDS

Lords lived good lives, they are close to the top of the pyramid and are in close contact with the king. Lords give loyalty and military aid to the king. Lords get military service and homage from knights and Lords give shelter, protection, and food back to the knights. Lords ate really well, lords ate meat, white bread, fish, and drank wine or ale. Lords held power over Manors and holding court and deciding punishments for crimes.

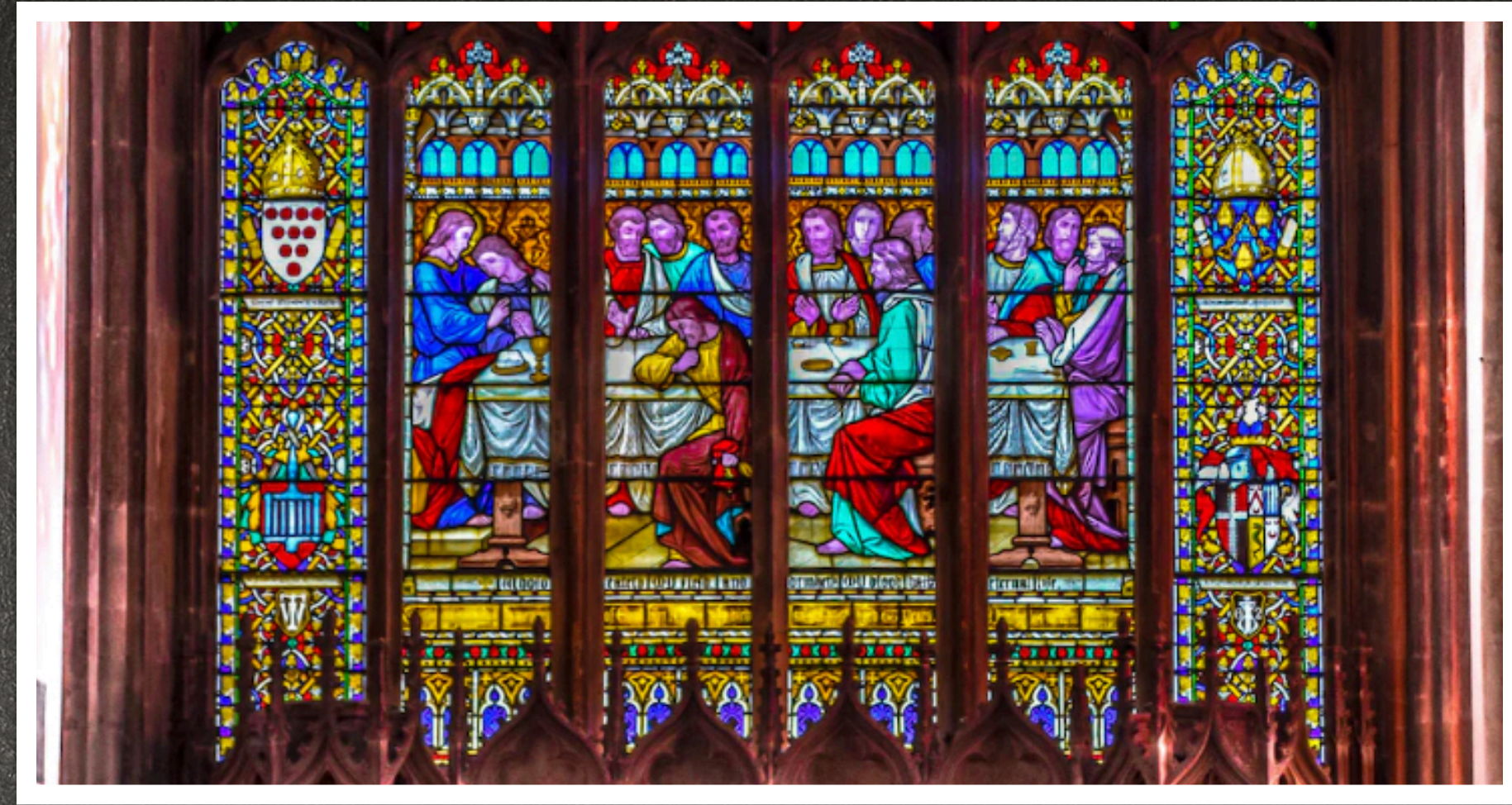


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## WHAT POWER DID BARONS HAVE OVER THE KING?

Barons had control over the Manor which doesn't seem like to much at first, but if we look deeper into the power they had, they could be a threat to the king. Manors house peasants, serfs, but most importantly, knights. Knights gave military service to the king, but under the control of Barons. The reason Barons have so much power is because if the king does something bad, the Baron and the manor can overthrow the king with his knights.





Unsplash: Tom Podmore

# KINGS

Kings are at the top of the feudal system. Kings have absolute power over control of land, riches, and Nobles/Lords. Kings receive military aid, and loyalty from Lords and Nobles. Kings and Monarchs live in castles, eat well, and live rich lives.



Unsplash: Dieter K

## THE POPE

The Pope is higher than the king, and had the most power out of anyone out there. Rome became an increasingly important centre of faith, which gave the pope of Rome more power than the church itself. In medieval Europe, being Catholic was a big deal, and the pope was the ultimate representative of God and God is who everyone worshiped. Popes we're seen as God messengers and even today, the pope represents a direct line to Jesus. The pope resided in Viterbo, Orvieto, Perugia, and Avignon.

# THE CHURCH

## What Power Did the Church Have?

The Church was considered independent so they didn't have to pay taxes. Being Catholic was a big deal and back then, everyone believed heaven and hell. The church had made everyone believe that if you didn't follow strict rules, you would go to hell. The church made peasants lives even harder than they already were because peasants had to give 10% of what they earned to the church, this could be in food or goods. The church got its power from owning land, making alliances, and people that went to church, served to the government. In the end, this made the pope more powerful than the King and Queen



THE PLAGUE AND TORTURE  
METHODS

## Where Did the Plague Start and How Did it Spread?

The plague is believed to have started in China in 1334. For there, it reached Sicilian ports by ship trade in the late 1340's. The plague is carried by rodents and fleas and soon spread throughout all of Europe. The plague surprisingly didn't affect the rest of the world badly at all, it was just bad in Europe.



## Who Did the Plague Affect Most?

The plague affected Peasants most because they had close to no protection or sanitation. The fleas that would carry the plague would hide in their roofs because they were thatched. In the end, the plague killed 75-200 million people, or 60% of ALL of Europe



# Torture Methods

## Copper Boot

The copper boot could be used in three different ways. First the victim had their feet placed in copper boots held down by chains. What they did to end up in this situation will determine what method the torturer will use. The first method is boiling water, the torturer would fill the boot with water and put it over a fire, burning the victims foot until they passed out, died, or confessed. The second way is to fill the boot with molten hot metals, giving the victim 3rd degree burns and damaging the boot. The last but not least painful way, is to beat the boots with a hammer until the victim passed out.

## Wooden horse

The wooden horse or Chevalet is a blade mounted on 4 legs. The victim would slowly get lowered onto the blade with one leg on each side, the victim would be held tightly with ropes. The wooden horse would guarantee a slow, painful death, and is considered the most brutal and painful torture device ever used in the Middle Ages

## Iron Chair

The iron chair was used extensively in the Middle Ages. It's main strength was the psychological fear the victims would experience. The chair was lined with 500-1,500 sharp spikes, the spikes line the back, arm rests, seat, foot rests, and leg rests. Some versions even had spikes on the head rest and the victims head would be pushed into the spikes. The torturer would seat them in the chair and restrain the victims wrists. The torturer would also tighten the restraints forcing them deep into the victims flesh. If that wasn't enough, they light a fire under the chair until the victim gets roasted alive slowly. This whole process would last hours or days at a time. The spikes would keep the wounds closed, so if death wasn't instant, after getting removed from the chair you would die instantly.





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## Wrap up

There are many more torture methods I didn't cover because, believe it or not, there were more than 3! Thank you for reading this presentation about the Middle Ages in our power play unit. I enjoyed making this and I learned a lot of new things about the Middle Ages! I hope you enjoyed reading/critiquing my presentation!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING OR  
READING!