

# The Middle Ages

## Middle Ages Basics

The Middle Ages was a time between the 5th and 15th centuries, after the Roman Empire fell and before the Renaissance. It was a time of big changes in Europe, with feudalism, the Catholic Church, and new art styles.

## Society and Politics

### Feudalism

Feudalism was how society worked during the Middle Ages. Land ownership was important and decided who had power. The king gave land to nobles, who gave land to knights, and the lowest group was the peasants.



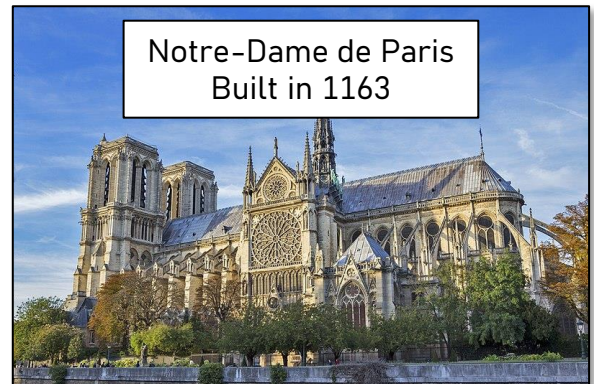
### The Catholic Church

The Church was very important in the Middle Ages. It brought people together, provided education, and was involved in politics. Monasteries, abbeys, and cathedrals were important places for learning and worship.

## Culture and Art

### Gothic Architecture

Gothic architecture was popular in the Middle Ages. It had pointed arches, ribbed vaults, and flying buttresses, which let buildings be taller and more open. Examples include Notre-Dame de Paris and Chartres Cathedral.



### Literature and Language

During the Middle Ages, people started writing in their own languages instead of Latin. Famous works include Dante's "Divine Comedy," Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales," and the poem "Beowulf."

### Art and Illumination

Art in the Middle Ages focused on religion and teaching Bible stories. Manuscript illumination, or decorating handwritten texts with pictures, was popular. Famous examples are the Book of Kells and the Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry.

In summary, the Middle Ages was a time of big changes in society, politics, and culture. It helped create the foundation for later developments during the Renaissance and beyond.

# Fall of Rome - Rise of Feudalism/Middle Ages

## Introduction

The fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century led to the emergence of feudalism and the Middle Ages in Europe.

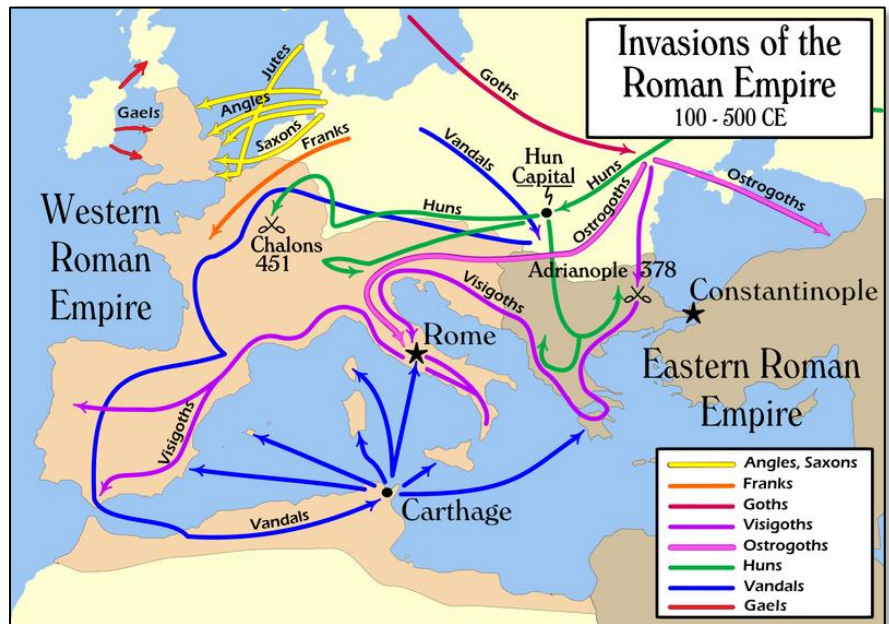
## Rome's Decline and Aftermath

### The Decline of Rome

The Roman Empire declined due to factors like economic instability, political corruption, and barbarian invasions. As Roman authority weakened, its territories split into smaller kingdoms and regions with their own leaders.

### Barbarian Settlements

Barbarian tribes, such as Visigoths and Vandals, invaded and established their own kingdoms, further breaking down Roman influence.



## The Rise of Feudalism

### Need for Protection and Stability

As centralized authority vanished, local rulers sought ways to protect their communities. Feudalism emerged, with rulers offering land and protection to warriors in exchange for loyalty and military service.

### The Feudal System

Feudalism featured a hierarchy based on land ownership and obligations. The king granted land to nobles, who granted land to knights. Knights defended the noble's land and its people, while peasants worked the land in exchange for protection.

## The Middle Ages and Rome's Legacy

### The Catholic Church's Role

The Church preserved the Roman legacy and provided unity during the Middle Ages. It maintained Latin, preserved Roman knowledge, and served as a unifying force across Europe.

### Evolution of Political Structures

Feudalism allowed local governance to develop, eventually evolving into more centralized monarchies. This laid the foundation for modern nation-states.