Notes for Feudalism – From Glencoe – Discovering our past Medieval and Early Modern Times – Pages 334 – 343

Charlemagne’s Grandaddy needed an army to fight the Muslims invading France.

So what did he do?

He gave away land, or large estates, to those fighting for him. The land owners of the estates used the money they made off the land to buy horses and weapons.

Later they will realize this was the beginning of Feudalism.

QUESTION: What Happens when government falls apart?

What is feudalism?

When Rome collapsed peasants and farmers did not rely on kings but Nobles for protection.

So begins the SHIFT of power. It went from Kings to the Nobles.

Feudalism is defined – landowning Nobles governed and protected the people in return for services.  
What are services? Services is like chores and duties. Say they farmed for the noblemen and the nobles protected them. Services included fighting or farming

By the year 1,000 AD Europe was divided into 1,000’s of feudal territories. In the center of every territory were Castles or Fortresses.

Question: Would you want to live in a feudal system or keep the democracy?

Vassal? A noble who served a Lord of a higher rank. Nobles are Vassals and Lords.

We can call them Knights. They show loyalty by serving in the army. They receive some of the Lords land. Fief is the term given for the name of the Land that the Vassal got

Knights – fight on horse. From 700-1200’s they were the most powerful men in the armies. They fought on horse and had armor and lances.

Can you name any other society outside of Europe that had this concept of Fedualism?

The Fiefs were called Manors – lords ruled manors and peasants worked the land.

Some of the people on the land were called Peasants. Peasants are free and work the land. They pay fees and taxes and can move wherever they wish.

Serfs - Serfs worked the land. They could not leave or marry with out the lords approval. They were not slaves because they could not take away land or trade them. Worked usually 3 days for the lord and 4 days growing their own food. How do they become free? Run away for 1 year to another town. Or they can buy the release.

Day 2?

Life in middle ages.

Technology break through in medieval Europe.

Heavy Wheeled Plow With Iron Blade to break up soil

Horse Collar to pull plow faster than ox

Water mills to ground flours. And Windmills for grinding where there is no water.

Rotated crops to every 3 fields instead of 2 the soil stayed fertile.

Life –

Knights lived by a code called Chivalry – Obey Lord, be Brave, show respect to women of noble birth, honor church, help people. Be honest and fight fairly.

Question: Do you see how Chivalry still lives today?

Castles?

Center of the Manor. Built on a motte – on a hill or man made hill.

The Keep is the central building inside the Motte

Peasants lived in wood framed clay surrounded cottages with straw roofs. Some 1 room some had 2 rooms. They worked year round except over 50 feast days they would not work the most famous being Christmas and Easter. On Sunday and feast days is when the priest would teach basic elements of the Christian Belief.

Made bread in community ovens and ate veggies milk nuts and fruits. Sometimes eggs and meat

So as time passed and the feudal system kept things safe and technology helped towns and cities to grow around 1,100 AD

There were two big trade cities

Venice – Italy traded with Byzantine Empire (eastern rome)

Flanders Belgium – traded wool and cloths.

Champagne France began holding trade fairs.

So as trade got bigger and bigger they switched from Barter to Gold and Silver coins

Guilds – Guilds emerged, to make trade fair. The specialized craft groups organized groups. Guilds were made up of the middle class. Not Vassals not Lords and not serfs they didn’t own land but they were wealthy.

Guilds developed Standards to decide how much things sold and who could join

Apprientence could learn the trade at age 10 – they got room and board but no wage

5-7 years as a journeyman who got wages

When you develop a Master Piece you could become a master

Women could help with the craftsman. If the husband died the woman could carry on the craft.

Life in the towns – Dirty, smelly, lots of smoke. Butchers dumped animal waste into the river.