

Irfan Ajvazi

# Middle Ages

Tesla Academy of Sciences

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## Middle Ages

The middle ages in Europe, a period of time from approximately A. D 500 to 1400, have been referred by a variety of terms- the age of faith, the dark ages, the age of feudalism, and even a golden age. The medieval era began with the destruction of the Roman Empire and the disorder that followed, which led to the rise of feudalism. During this period of darkness, the Roman Catholic Church provided spiritual direction as well as many nonreligious functions for the people of the times. Many literary, artistic, and architectural advanced occurred. From A. D. 00 to 1400, Europe went through a period of faith, disease, terror, feudalism, and advancements in art and architecture.

This period is commonly referred to as the Middle Ages. The middle Ages brought an epidemic that killed roughly one-third of Europe's total population, renewed faith in God, and advancements in art, architecture and science. It is quite impossible to describe the middle Ages using one label. The Dark Ages, Age of Faith, and Golden Age of Europe have completely different meanings but come to describe one period in time- the Middle Ages. The middle Ages are sometimes referred to as the Dark ages, and rightfully so.

“... The culture of the Europeans lagged behind that of neighbors such as Byzantium and the Islamic world for most of the time.” (John McCannon, PhD). They were steps behind the Islamic world, and in some cases were considered to be barbarians.

Europe was a very backwards society. One group of documents— #1 and [#3—provide](#) examples of Europe being referred to as the ‘Dark Ages.’ Document 1 state that barbarians have sacked towns and villages, laid waste to the fields, and burned down the churches. All trade has ceased, and the people have gone to cower in forests or have taken refuge in the high mountains.

People would live in fear of their lives and could not trust anyone. According to document 3, there is great slaughter and the Vikings have plundered and burned down the towns. During this time invasions were eternal and bad health was inevitable. The end of the world was thought to have come.

The invasions, backwardness of European society, and the Bubonic Plague came to represent the ‘Dark Ages.’ Another label for the middle Ages can be the ‘Golden Age of Europe.’

During the late Middle Ages a growth of scientific and philosophical knowledge began to occur.

There was an increase in attention to art and architecture. Europe started to move forward in terms of intellect and culture. The ‘Golden Age of Europe’ is well exemplified in documents 6, 7, and 10.

“... we learn that an age once traditionally described as ‘dark’ had remarkable vitality and exuberance.

... But even more it was creative and inventive, and transmitted to later ages great rich.