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Medieval Europe

1. The Eastern Roman empire or Byzantine empire was a vast empire and its capital Constantinople was the largest city of that time.
2. The Byzantines built beautiful churches. The most famous of these is the church of St. Sophia in Constantinople. This church was built during the reign of Byzantine emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD.
3. The Ottoman Turks conquered the Byzantine territories in 1453.

Feudalism

1. The word 'feudal' comes from feud which originally meant a fief or land held on condition or service. In a feudal society, land was the source of power.
2. Feudalism originated in the 8th & 9th centuries.
3. First of all in western Europe the feudal system developed
4. The main division in feudal society was between 'feudal lords', who either got a share of the peasants' produce or had peasants to work on their lands without any payment, and 'Peasants', who worked on the land.

Feudal Hierarchy:

1. Feudal Lords: a. Kings b. Dukes & Earls c. Barons d. Knights.
2. Peasants : three categories of peasants — freeholders, villeins & serfs. In feudal hierarchy, the king stood at the top and peasant stood at the bottom.
3. The economic life under the feudal system was predominantly rural. The unit of land, which was like a village-farm, was called 'manor'.

Crusades : 1095 AD — 1291 AD

1. Crusades means the military expeditions, under the banner of the cross, organised in western Christendom primarily to recover the Holy Places of Palestine from Muslim occupation.
2. Four Crusades were fought by the European Christian to liberate Jerusalem from Seljuq Turks (Muslims) who did not permit Christian pilgrims to enter the holy land.

3. The 1st Crusade (1095-99) was launched after the provoking preachings of Pope Urban II. Jerusalem was captured and the Crusader states of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the country of Edessa, Antioch and Tripoli were created.
4. The fall of Edessa (1144) inspired the unsuccessful 2nd Crusade (1147-48).
5. The capture of Jerusalem by Saladin in 1187 led the inconclusive 3rd Crusade (1189-92), led by Philip II Augustus of France, Frederick I Barbarossa of Germany, and Richard I (the 'Lion Heart') of England.
6. The 4th Crusade (1202-91) was diverted from its original objective, Egypt, and sacked Constantinople (1204). This Crusade failed to recover lost ground and Acre, the last foothold of West in Palestine, was lost in 1291.

