The Middle Ages

Feudalism
Feudalism Rises

• A system of landholding and governing

• It was based on an exchange of protection for other services
Lords give knights/vassals land (fief) in exchange for the knights’ promise to defend the lord and his land.
Feudal Society

- Rigid (strict) class structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fief</th>
<th>Land given to a Vassal from a Lord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vassal</td>
<td>The person receiving the fief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serf</td>
<td>Peasants who work the land</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The **manor** is the lord’s **estate**
• The manor **system** is an **economic** arrangement that is **self-sufficient**
Manors

• Lord provides housing, strips of farmland, and protection from bandits

• In return, serfs tend the lands, cared for his animals, and maintained the estate/manor
Life on the Manor

- Rarely traveled more than 25 miles from the manor
- Generally 15-30 families lived in the village on a manor
- Everything needed such as food, clothes, fuel, lumber and leather goods were produced on the manor
- Only outside purchases were salt, iron and unusual objects