

UNIT 6: ISLAM IN SPAIN.-

1- The origin of Islam



The origin of Islam dates back to the 7th century in Saudi Arabia. The prophet **MUHAMMAD** introduced Islam in 610 A.D. after experiencing what he claimed to be an angelic visitation. Muhammad dictated the **QUR'AN**, the holy book of Islamic religion. God gives this book to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel.

People who believe in Islamic religion are called **MUSLIMS**

In the Qur'an are the perfect words of ALLAH. Allah is the God for Muslims.



2- The expansion of Islam.- Al-Andalus.

After the death of Muhammad in 612, the Muslims declared a holy war or **JIHAD** in order to extend their empire and expand Islam. They conquered vast territories in the Middle East, North Africa and in the IBERIAN peninsula.



In 711 **Tarik ibn Ziyad**, a governor of Tangier (Africa) crossed into Spain with an army of 12.000 and they stayed.

At that time, Spain became Islamic and it was called **AL-ANDALUS**.



Al-Andalus, or Islamic Spain, was organized under the leadership of the Caliphate of Damascus

The Caliphate of Damascus is governed by the **CALIPHS**, which belonged to **UMMAYYAD** Dynasty. One Ummayyad prince came to Spain, and under the name of **Abd al Rahman**, founded a politically independent amirate: the **CALIPHATE of CORDOBA** in Spain.

3- The Mosque of Cordoba.



The Mosque of Cordoba is attributed to Abd al Rahman, inspired by the mosques of Damascus. It manifests the triumphs of his people and the gratitude for his faith.

The construction of the biggest mosque of the world begins in 780 AD, over the structure of the visigothic church of Saint Vincent.

The actual mosque occupies 23.400 square meters, with almost 500 columns and superimposed arches. It is the most beautiful representation of the **CALIFAL ART**.

Some important elements of Cordobesian mosque are: *The Gate of the Forgiveness*, *Patio of the Orange Trees*, *The Gate of Palms*, and the **MIHRAB**, or the place to which Muslims must look forwards it faces Mecca.

In 1.253, in the middle of the Mosque, a Christian cathedral is built.

