

consequently the two of them propagate. This is indicated by God's saying, 'How can there be offspring to Him and He has no female companion.¹ *And He is not begotten.* Because everything born is an occurrence and a (material) body. God, however, is ancient, there is no beginning to His existence and He is not a body. *And He has no equal, i.e., no likeness or resemblance.* It is allowed to explain this of companionship in marriage and to deny a female consort."²

This, then, is the definition of the Essence of God, according to the Koran and the best commentaries. How far such negations come short of the sublime statements of revelation: God is a Spirit; God is light; God is love.

¹I have purposely used the word *God* for Allah in my translation and capitalized *He* to show how shocking such ideas seem to the Christian consciousness.

²On the word *Samad* (Eternal) there is a curious note in the biography of Mohammed known as *Insan-el Ayoon* (Vol. I., p. 372), margin: "*Samad* means that which has no insides or inside organs and was the name given by Mohammed to God in reply to the Nejran Christians who affirmed that Jesus ate food; for God needs no food and has no organs of digestion!" The same explanation of the word is given by Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, and Ibn Zobeir. According to Al Shóbi, it means one who neither eats nor drinks. Others say it means one who has no successor. Al Suddi explains it to be one who is sought after for favors and presents. (See further Dr. Hartwig Hirschfeld's *New Researches into the Composition and Exegesis of the Quran*, p. 42, note. London, 1902; Royal Asiatic Society.)