

Rebuttal to Sam Shamoun's Article "Allah's Imperfection and Mutability"

Sam Shamoun's article could be located here <http://www.answering-islam.org/Shamoun/imperfection.htm> Sam Shamoun said: Perfection is a necessary attribute of God since it directly ties in with God being a self-sufficient entity. Perfection in reference to Deity refers to being complete in and of itself, lacking nothing and needing no one: "And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." James 1:4 When the above text speaks about believers being perfect it refers to God granting them everything necessary to attain moral perfection and incorruptibility. For God to be imperfect means that he is not complete and therefore lacks specific attributes or characteristics that are necessary for him to be self-sufficient. My Response: Agreed. Sam Shamoun said: The god of Islam is a deity who is not perfect and is not immutable but changing. For instance, according to the Quran and the so-called authentic traditions Allah lacked an attribute which he then had to create and inscribe for himself: Say: To whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth? Say: To Allah; He has ordained mercy on Himself; most certainly He will gather you on the resurrection day -- there is no doubt about it. (As for) those who have lost their souls, they will not believe. S. 6:12 Shakir And when those who believe in Our communications come to you, say: Peace be on you, your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself, (so) that if any one of you does evil in ignorance, then turns after that and acts aright, then He is Forgiving, Merciful. S. 6:54 Shakir Allah inscribing or ordaining mercy on or for himself implies that this is what he chose to become, and wasn't something he already was or always has been. This is precisely how the narrations attributed to Muhammad explain it: Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah's Apostle saying, Verily Allah CREATED Mercy. The day He created it, He made it into one hundred parts. He withheld with Him ninety-nine parts, and sent its one part to all His creatures. Had the non-believer known of all the Mercy which is in the Hands of Allah, he would not lose hope of entering Paradise, and had the believer known of all the punishment which is present with Allah, he would not consider himself safe from the Hell-Fire." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 8, Book 76, [Number 476](#)) Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: When Allah created the creation, He ordained for Himself and this document is with Him: Verily, My mercy predominates My wrath. (Sahih Muslim, Book 037, [Number 6628](#)) Abu Huraira reported: I heard Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: Allah CREATED mercy in one hundred parts and He retained with Him ninety-nine parts, and He has sent down upon the earth one part, and it is because of this one part that there is mutual love among the creation so much so that the animal lifts up its hoof from its young, one, fearing that it might harm it. (Sahih Muslim, Book 037, [Number 6629](#)) Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: Allah CREATED one hundred (parts of mercy) and He distributed one amongst His creation and kept this one hundred excepting one with Himself (for the Day of Resurrection). (Sahih Muslim, Book 037, [Number 6630](#)) Salman reported that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: Verily, Allah CREATED, on the same very day when He created the heavens and the earth, one hundred parts of mercy. Every part of mercy is coextensive with the space between the heavens. and the earth and He out of this mercy endowed one part to the earth and it is because of this that the mother shows affection to her child and even the beasts and birds show kindness to one another and when there would be the Day of Resurrection, Allah would make full (use of Mercy). (Sahih Muslim, Book 037, [Number 6634](#)) What the foregoing shows is that Allah is imperfect since he lacked an essential characteristic which he had to later create for himself. It further shows that he is mutable since he had to create mercy in order for him to have it as a quality, showing that he changed from not having mercy to later having it. This implies that Allah is unknowable and a being who is purely volitional (purely will). He doesn't have an immutable nature whereby a believer can know for sure that Allah will act a certain way, as opposed to merely choosing to act in a specific manner or to do certain things. Yet there is nothing to prevent such a being from deciding to act in a contrary way, i.e. he can just as easily lie and cheat as he can speak the truth and deal justly. My Response: Sam seems to have a misunderstanding. Sam thinks that when Allah created Mercy that means that Allah was not merciful before that. That is not what it means. The hadith did not say that Allah became merciful at a certain point in time. Mercy is an attribute of God. However, what the Hadith were emphasizing is the act of mercy that God will implement on his creation. (Fathul Bari, [Source](#)) Let me try to clarify this up a bit. One of the attributes of Allah is that he is 'Al Khaliq', meaning 'the Creator'. Now before Allah created the pen (the first thing Allah created) Allah did not create anything, as there was nothing in existence. So does that mean that Allah was not The Creator because he did not create anything? Of course not. Another attribute of Allah is that he is 'Al Mussawir', meaning 'the Fashioner'. Now if there was no creation for Allah to fashion does that mean that he was not The Fashioner? No of course not. Similarly just because there was no creation for Allah to bestow his mercy upon that does not mean that Allah was not the All Merciful. How could Allah have created mercy if He wasn't the source of mercy in the first place? Lets try to understand the Quranic verses and hadith a bit better. 419. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: I heard Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying, "When Allah created the creatures, He wrote in the Book, which is with Him over His Throne: `Verily, My Mercy prevailed over

[tion=myarticle](#) Sam Shamoun said: There is a Being who can be trusted and who does act consistently, Yahweh Elohim. The Holy Bible teaches that Yahweh is perfect and therefore lacks nothing and needs no one: "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He." Deuteronomy 32:4 "Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you; I am God, your God. I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, And your burnt offerings are continually before Me. I shall take no young bull out of your house Nor male goats out of your folds. For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird of the mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains. Shall I eat the flesh of bulls Or drink the blood of male goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High; Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me." Psalm 50:7-15 "As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the LORD is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him." Psalm 18:30 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:48 "nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;" Acts 17:25 God's true Word further states that Yahweh is immutable: "I say, 'O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days, Your years are throughout all generations. Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end.'" Psalm 102:24-27 "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed." Malachi 3:6 "In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us." Hebrews 6:17-18 "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow." James 1:17 Moreover, the Holy Scriptures teach that Yahweh is eternal: "Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God." Psalm 90:2 "Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting." Psalm 93:2 Since Yahweh is perfect, immutable and eternal this means that all his characteristics are immutable and eternal as well: "Remember, O LORD, Your compassion and Your lovingkindnesses, For they have been from of old." Psalm 25:6 "But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children," Psalm 103:17 Hence, this Deity is the only One worthy of being called God and of being worshiped by all creation! Yahweh alone can be completely and fully trusted since he always acts consistently with his immutable and perfect nature: "Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it." Psalm 37:5 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6 "Thus says the LORD, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the LORD. For he will be like a bush in the desert And will not see when prosperity comes, But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, A land of salt without inhabitant. Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, That extends its roots by a stream And will not fear when the heat comes; But its leaves will be green, And it will not be anxious in a year of drought Nor cease to yield fruit.'" Jeremiah 17:5-8 My Response: Well Allah is perfect as well no matter what you try to do… Surah 61:8 They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths but Allah will perfect His light, though the unbelievers may be averse. He has control of all things… Surah 3:165 What! when a misfortune befell you, and you had certainly afflicted (the unbelievers) with twice as much, you began to say: Whence is this? Say: It is from yourselves; surely Allah has power over all things. _ Allah is also unchangeable in his promises and purpose… Surah 6:34 Rejected were the apostles before thee: with patience and constancy they bore their rejection and their wrongs, until Our aid did reach them: there is none that can alter the words (and decrees) of God. Already hast thou received some account of those apostles. Surah 10:64 For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present and in the Hereafter; no change can there be in the words of God. This is indeed the supreme felicity. _ messengers indeed have been denied before you - herein is a consolation for the Prophet (s) - yet they endured patiently the denial and the persecution until Our victorious help came to them, through the destruction of their peoples, so be patient until the victorious help comes to you through the destruction of your people. There is none to alter the words of God, His promises, and there has already come to you tidings of the messengers, [tidings] through which your heart can be at peace. (Jalal ud-Din Siyuti, Tafsir al-Jalalayn, Commentary on Surah 6:34, [Source](#)) Sam has done nothing to show how Allah is imperfect. All he has done is that he has shown us verses and hadith about the perfection of Allah's mercy.