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Contemporary Trends of Economic Extremism in the Interpretation of Divine Scriptures

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Abstract

This researchpaper analyzes current tendencies of economic radicalism through the lens of sacred texts, particularly studying the Quran, the Old Testament and the New Testament. Such approaches to economics that involve zealously radical and polarizing policies to the allocation of resources are termed 'economic extremism'. It stems from deep laden religious instructions that support social order, redistribution of wealth and responsibility. The Quran promotes social welfare and economic equity through Zakat (charity) and the prohibition of Riba (usury). The Old Testament mentions stewardship which advocates for prudent and responsible management of resources and also introduces the Jubilee year which resets economic inequalities. Jesus' teachings in the New Testament emphasize the need to be selfless, communal, and participate within the community instead of being a materialistic individual. Extreme interpretations have resulted in the creation of Islamic socialism, Prosperity Gospel, and even Liberation Theology which either support or counter Western capitalism. These interpretations are important to consider when discussing world economies because they affect policies, social movements, and political conversations. The article calls for more balanced readings of religious texts able to alleviate modern economic hardships like poverty and inequality without inciting greater division and conflict.

Keywords: *Economic Extremism, Religious Scriptures, Quran, Old Testament, New Testament, Wealth Distribution.*

Introduction

Economics extremism, a well-known phrase for radicalistic or unorthodox approaches to an economic system, stems from a deep contradiction to every existing course of economic thinking. It can appear in some ways, such as radical capitalism, extreme wealth redistribution, or the abolishment of modern financial systems. From an analytical point, the roots are found in history within religious texts because important components of economic like wealth concentration and sharing, and morality associated with commerce were given a religious sanction[1]. In the case of the Old Testament, the

[1] Berman, E. (2011). *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism*. MIT Press.

Jubilee year highlighted the periodic correction of socio-economic disparities, while in Islam, the forbidding of usury (riba), alongside mandated charity (zakat) offered a moral justification to distribute wealth. These interpretations effectively constructed societal and economical systems in the past, and continue to inform modern discourse around socio-economic issues concerning justice, equity, and fairness[2].

Nowadays, a globalized and more polarized economic landscape calls for the investigation of contemporary economic extremism with regard to religious texts. In modern society characterized by the intersection of religious ideologies and global markets, the reformation of sacred scriptures creates situations where the rise of movements can either meet established economic standards or attempt to change or shake them[3]. From the Islamic finance sector, a field based on interpretations of Quran that promote ethical investing and social welfare to prosperity gospel in Christianity that connects faith with wealth and supports capitalist views, economic extremism based on religious teachings is found in modern practices[4]. Not just theological musings, such interpretations have real world consequences, with direct impact on national policies, economic reforms, and even global financial markets. In order to understand how religious frameworks still shape economic thought and practice, sometimes in opposition to or challenge to secular economic theories, it is crucial to understand the contemporary trends of economic extremism in the interpretation of the Quran, the Old Testament, and the New Testament. The purpose of this article is to study these contemporary trends and to see how the twentieth century economic interpretations of these holy books affect both individual nations and the whole world's economy.

Conceptualizing Economic Extremism

Economic extremism in reference to the current economic ideologies is the application or rejection of the existing economic system to the maximum degree. The excess of capitalist practices (capital is in the hands of a few individuals or corporation which leads to monopolies or great income inequality) is one form of economic extremism[5]. Such capitalist extremism can promote an unchecked pursuit of profit, resulting in the exploitation of workers, environmental degradation, and the erosion of social safety nets[6]. On the other hand, anti capitalist extremism aims at dismantling the capitalist structures altogether and replacing them with economic systems based on collective ownership or the redistribution of wealth. Often, these views are presented in response to the systemic inequality and injustice built into capitalist economies and the demand for a radical change that will completely overturn the profit motive at the heart of capitalism. But all of these extremist ideologies rise alongside the political and economic situation, primarily in conditions of the economic crisis, social unrest, and political instability.

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[2] Cheong, J. (2023, August). Islamic Economics for Christian Ministry and Mission. *Lausanne Global Analysis*. Retrieved from lausanne.org

[3] World Bank Group. (2016). *Islamic Finance: A Catalyst for Shared Prosperity?* Retrieved from documents1.worldbank.org

[4] Kobyliński, M. (2022). Ethical Aspects of the Prosperity Gospel in the Light of the Pentecostalization of Christianity. *Religions*, 12(11), 996. Retrieved from mdpi.com

[5] Nasr, V. (2009). *The rise of Islamic capitalism: Why the new Muslim middle class is the key to defeating extremism*. Simon and Schuster.

[6] Loewenstein, A. (2015). *Disaster capitalism: Making a killing out of catastrophe*. Verso Books.

Radical alternatives often spring up during periods where economic paradigm brings deep inequality or is perceived (rightly or wrongly) as corrupt in respect of control over financial and political systems, claiming to right the former by reimagining the bases of economic power and wealth distribution.

The political and social context in which economic extremism arises has a great deal of impact on the interpretation of it. Extremist economic ideologies take hold in societies experiencing economic instability, as they respond to the state of affairs in the society. For example, during financial crisis and the process of rapid globalization, when societies experience economic instability, people are looking for ways to respond to the present situation, and extremist economic ideologies will be the response. It is especially true when unemployment is high, income inequality is great or when people no longer have faith in existing political systems. As an example, political movements that propose the abolition of capitalist structures and other measures for the absolute redistribution of wealth become more popular during economic recessions because these will offer equity and justice, regardless of what the situation is on the ground. Often, the rise of movements for radical economic reform has reflected a demoralized public frustration with society's failure to meet the needs of those on the bottom in an economically unequal society. Moreover, these movements contest economic policies, and simultaneously reshape the power, wealth, and role of government discourse in promoting and restructuring national and global economies. Economic extremism, in this sense, is a critique of current conditions, as well as a call for fundamental changes in the structural ways of production, distribution and control of wealth.

Historically, religious texts have contributed much in crafting economic practices as it created moral and ethical principles for use in managing wealth and resources. They usually contain rules of social welfare, justice and fairness and duties regarding wealth creation and distribution. These teachings were instrumental in the running of economies in the old days, with religious doctrines being applied withouts reservations on public policy. For example, some are in accordance with communally created policy with regards to poverty and inequality, while others are with regard to individual charity and the obligation of assisting those in need. Even in modern times, religious interpretations of economic justice still affect policy in financial systems and economic conduct. In certain circumstances, these interpretations can inspire alternative economic systems, including Islamic finance and other religiously motivated charitable organizations, in order to address modern economic issues with religious and moral standards in mind. Moreover, movements that either question or prop up the existing economic order are also the intersection of the faith and economics, depending on how the religious texts are interpreted. These interpretations not only affect individuals' behavior but also do so for the overall discourse of what a just and ethical economy ought to be in contemporary world.

Contemporary Trends of Economic Extremism in the Interpretation of the Quran

Based on the Quran, the framework of economic ethics is that of social justice, equitable distribution of wealth and individuals and society's responsibilities. Zakat is one of the most important principles in the Quran and it requires that a certain part of one's wealth must be given to the needy, so that wealth circulates in the society and does not remain concentrated in the hands of the wealthy. As stated in the Quran:

وَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱلرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ-

"And establish prayer and give zakat and obey the Messenger - that you may receive mercy"[7].

Quran verse mentions three important practices in Islam: establish the prayer (Salah), give the charity (Zakat) and obey the Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The actions are a Muslim's daily life and spiritual development. The five obligatory daily prayers, that are a source of constant reminder to the relationship with Allah and practice of discipline and humility throughout the day is known as establishing prayer. Another practice in Islam is Zakat, which is giving a portion of one's wealth for the sake of the less fortunate. Charity is not the only intention as it is also purifying the wealth and reducing the economic inequality in the society. Zakat has the power to redistribute wealth in order to maintain the poor and needy, thereby creating a mentality of the community and social responsibility. Finally, obedience to the Messenger means following the guidance of Prophet Muhammad, whose life is a model for Muslims in all aspects of life; from personal behaviour to the way to govern society. The verse ends by saying that such practices bring about the mercy and blessings of Allah, thus underscoring the fact that spiritual growth and social justice are very closely related to one another in Islam.

The Quran also addresses the concept of Riba (usury), explicitly prohibiting it in several verses, such as:

ٱلَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ ٱلَّذِى يَتَخَبَّطُهُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ مِنَ ٱلْمَسِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَا ٱلْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۗ وَأَحَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ ٱلرِّبَوٰا۟ ۚ فَمَن جَآءَهُۥ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ فَٱنتَهَىٰ فَلَهُۥ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُۥٓ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ-

"Those who consume usury will not stand except as stand those who have been driven to madness by the touch of Shaytan. That is because they say, 'Trade is just like usury.' But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden usury. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and stops may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns to it – those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein"[8].

This verse strongly condemns the act of consuming Riba (usury or interest) in Islam, likening those who engage in it to people who are in a state of mental disturbance, driven to madness by the influence of Shaytan (Satan). The comparison emphasizes the moral and spiritual harm that usury causes, both to the individual and to society. The verse also shows the justification that those who practice usury normally use, that usury is just like trade. However, the Quran points out that trade is allowed and even encouraged, but usury is absolutely prohibited because it is unfair to the borrower and widens the gap of economic inequality. The verse also gives room for repentance to those who have practiced usury by stopping and repenting to Allah by having His mercy to keep what they earned. This is designed to guarantee that money deals are reasonable and that

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[7] Quran, 24:56
[8] *Quran, 2:275*

nobody benefits at another person's misfortune. Moreover, Quran calls for a program of fair trade and just economic practice and it asks people to deal honestly amongst themselves. The Quranic principles of this economic thought are the base of Islamic economic thought, which emphasizes that wealth must not be gathered by the few and social welfare should be sought.

Over the past few years, these Quranic principles have been interpreted in radical ways, which have led to the existence of numerous movements that promote extreme economic ideologies like Islamic socialism and anti capital rhetoric. Islamic socialism aims to combine Quranic injunctions for redistribution of wealth with socialist ideals by advocating a more communal approach to the economic resources. In Turkey, for example, groups such as Anti-Capitalist Muslims have used Quranic verses about social justice to push back against capitalist structures by, among other things, demanding the redistribution of wealth as a religious duty[9]. They cite verses such as;

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِى كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٍ مِّا۟ئَةُ حَبَّةٍ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ-

"The example of those who spend their wealth in the path of Allah is like a seed of grain that produces seven ears, each containing a hundred grains"[10].

This verse highlights a powerful metaphor to make a point of how much a reward a person gets and are those giving for the sake of Allah. Charity, supporting the ones in need, or supporting any kind of beneficial causes are likened to planting a single seed and that after a right condition, it becomes a seven ears of grain and each ear has a hundred grains. It emphasizes that the reward for charity is exponential so that even little giving can be multiplied into rewards much bigger than the given amount. The verse further clarifies that Allah's reward for charity is not just generous but also multiplied by His will, which indicates Allah's endowment with magnificent mercy and grace. It also reminds us that charity of any kind is an investment that yields returns exponentially bigger than what may appear initially. Similarly, the FNKSDA movement in Indonesia has aligned itself with Islamic eco-socialism, advocating for the restructuring of the economic system along more egalitarian lines[11]. These movements argue that the Quran's principles of fairness and justice necessitate a system that directly confronts capitalism and its inequalities.

Radical interpretations of Islamic economic principles have made an impact worldwide, and in their original context Muslim countries such ideas have been used to support anti-capitalist policies. In some instances, such as in Turkey and Indonesia, where Islamic socialism has gained momentum as a political and social movement that contests the status quo on economy, there has been a call for state directed and communal economic

[9] Karanfil, İ. (2013). The evolution of social justice discourse of Turkish İslamism and anticapitalist Muslims. *Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü*.
[10] Quran, 2:261
[11] Robby, H. M. F., Maulidan, M., & Rizky, Z. M. (2022). Contemporary narratives of leftist Islam movements in Indonesia and Turkey: A comparative analysis. *Muslim Politics Review, 1*(2), 153-183. https://doi.org/10.56529/mpr.v1i2.59

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models[12]. The first thing these movements argue is that the exploitation built into the capitalism negates the Quranic injunction of fairness and justice. Yet, these interpretations have their critics. Scholars and Muslim thinkers argue for the adoption of a more moderate approach that brings the ethical teachings of the Quran in line with the modern economic systems without the need to go to extremes. For instance, Islamic values should be incorporated in modern financial systems like the promotion of Islamic banking, which is based on the principles of interest free loans and ethical investments. This focuses on generating an equitable society within the limitations of existing global economic structures, the essence of social welfare, ethical business practices and sustainable development without completely negating the capitalist elements. The ongoing debate over the application of Islamic economic ethics in the modern world is between radical economic extremism and reformist interpretations.

Contemporary Trends of Economic Extremism in the Interpretation of the Old Testament

The Old Testament offers a detailed framework of economic principles rooted in social justice, equitable wealth distribution, and moral stewardship. One of the most notable teachings is the concept of the Jubilee year, a practice where every fiftieth year, all debts were forgiven, and land was returned to its original owners, preventing the accumulation of wealth by a few individuals and promoting a more balanced economic system. This principle is outlined in Leviticus as;

"Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan"[13].

This verse from the Old Testament describes the Jubilee year, a significant social and economic practice among the Israelites. Once every fifty years, they forgave all debts and land that had sold due to financial hardship was returned back to the original owner or their family. Thus, the Jubilee year acted as a reset of the economic system, so that the wealth and the land would not become permanently concentrated in the hands of a few. The aim of this principle was to sustain social equity by ensuring that families would not become long term impoverished, and to require the fair and just treatment of the poor and vulnerable in society. A social and economic renewal was meant by the proclamation of liberty to all the inhabitants of the land, freeing those who had been enslaved or fallen under debt. While this system is very old, it is a reflection of very deep moral and ethical considerations of justice and fairness that were inherent in the social fabric of the Israelite community. It also emphasizes mercy and collective responsibility not to make a permanent disadvantage for anyone.

Furthermore, the Old Testament emphasizes the role of both the rich and the poor, urging the wealthy to assist those in need. Proverbs states,

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done"[14].

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[12] ibid
[13] The Holy Bible, New International Version. (2011). *Leviticus 25:10*. Zondervan

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The Book of Proverbs contains this verse, which stresses the need to be generous and compassionate towards the poor. In it, it puts forth a notion that doing things for others, even if it is out of kindness or charity, is not only morally correct, but also spiritually rewarding. Charity to the poor is said to be 'lending' to the Lord, that is, it is considered an offering to God, which will be rewarded. The verse implies that the reward from God for such actions is much more than any material return one would anticipate. This implies that helping the poor is a form of honoring God, and urges believers to do good deeds hoping for no returns, but in the knowledge that God will reward them in an otherworldly way.

The Old Testament also presents us with stewardship, where people are regarded as caretakers of the creation of God and required to manage the resources wisely. In Genesis 2:15, the idea is captured in the words;

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it"[15].

In the biblical narrative, the concept of stewardship is also introduced in this verse from Genesis in which one is taught his responsibility as regards God's creation. God puts Adam in the Garden of Eden with the specific task of 'working it and keeping it.' It points out that work and care for the environment are not only practical duties but also divine commands. Working in the Garden is seen as a stewardship that humans are charged to nurture and preserve the Earth. Thus, this verse implies that human beings are the caretakers of the creation; they are not owners, but rather they are managing resources on behalf of the others and they are supposed to maintain the resources sustainable and in good health.

Certain movements have taken extremist interpretations of Old Testament economic principles which they have used to justify radical economic ideologies in modern times. One of such movement is the prosperity gospel which states that financial success and material wealth is directly connected to faith and divine favor. The belief that people can receive financial blessings through positive confessions and donations to religious ministries is supported by proponents of this belief[16]. However, this long accepted interpretation has been ridiculed by many as an exploitation for making use of weaker people who thrive on the notion that wealth material means that God's approval has been there. It also distorts the biblical teachings on grace. In addition, religious groups, such as Liberation Theology and Socialist Christian Movements, argue that the economic inequality is related to the teachings of the Old Testament, which demands justice and care to the poor and consequently redistribution of wealth through state intervention[17].Passages of social justice like the care for widows and orphans are interpreted as a mandate for economic reforms to address systemic inequality. Grounded in a reading of the Bible as a book for issuing calls for fairness and generosity, these

[14] The Holy Bible, New International Version. (2011). *Proverbs 19:17*. Zondervan
[15] The Holy Bible, New International Version. (2011). *Genesis 2:15*. Zondervan
[16] Jones, D. W., & Woodbridge, R. S. (2011). *Health, wealth & happiness: Has the prosperity gospel overshadowed the gospel of Christ?*. Kregel Publications.
[17] Keaton, T. A. (2025). Critical (G) Race Theory: A Biblical Response to the Growing Secular Social Justice Movement.

Remittances Review
August 2024,
Volume: 9, No: 4, pp. 4023-4035
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movements advocate for considerable economic and policy changes the ones that come with attempts at large scale state-orchestrated redistribution

The influence of these extremist interpretations extends beyond theological circles and impacts society and politics. Prosperity Gospel movements, for example, have amassed large followings, especially in the United States, leading to the creation of churches and ministries that promote financial success through faith[18]. These groups often attract significant financial support, raising ethical concerns about the exploitation of followers, particularly among the poor. At the same time, the rise of religiously inspired economic policies based on Old Testament principles has shaped political discourse, particularly regarding social justice and wealth inequality. Supporters of these movements argue that biblical teachings provide a moral foundation for addressing economic disparities, while critics caution against the use of religious doctrine to shape secular policy. Progressive theological approaches offer a counterpoint to these extremist interpretations by advocating for more inclusive, socially responsible readings of Old Testament teachings. These perspectives emphasize justice, compassion, and responsible stewardship, calling for economic systems that prioritize the welfare of all, particularly the marginalized. Progressive theologians argue that the ethical framework found in the Old Testament encourages policies that address poverty, promote equity, and ensure fairness in economic systems, aligning more closely with modern ideals of social justice and inclusive economic development.

Contemporary Trends of Economic Extremism in the Interpretation of the New Testament

The New Testament offers profound teachings on wealth, poverty, and justice, emphasizing the moral responsibilities of individuals and communities. Jesus' teachings often highlight the dangers of materialism and the importance of generosity. In Matthew Jesus states;

"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money"[19].

The teaching that this verse from Matthew offers for us from Jesus is that you can't serve God and have material wealth as a motivating factor in your life. This is backed up by Jesus, who uses the metaphor of serving two masters to show that a person cannot fully serve both the spirit and the material. The verse warns about the temptation to put wealth above spiritual values, and that if we focus too much on money, there will be a spiritual corruption and division in our heart. The phrase "you cannot serve both God and money" is a direct warning to the danger of making wealth an idol, putting the pursuit of financial success at the center of one's life, and above service and devotion to God and moral integrity. In this situation, the verse has since commanded Christians to consider what their priorities are and to choose a life that puts their love and devotion to God before money.

[18] Drake, J. G. (2023). *The Gospel of Church: How Mainline Protestants Vilified Christian Socialism and Fractured the Labor Movement*. Oxford University Press.
[19] The Holy Bible, New International Version. (2011). *Matthew 6:24*. Zondervan

Remittances Review
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Additionally, the Parable of the Talents illustrates the expectation of responsible stewardship of resources, where servants are entrusted with talents and are judged based on their use of these resources.

" *"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth"*[20].

In a broader spiritual sense, the parable calls on believers to use their talents, skills, and resources for the advancement of God's work and to invest in ways that benefit His kingdom, whether through acts of charity, sharing knowledge, or spreading faith. God's servants are to be proven by the things they do, even if it is in secret by the ministering of the cross; by the desire and intensity of their prayers ; and by their personal depravement in sacrifice, the price of entering the Kingdom . The economic model of the early Christian community as described in Acts is that of shared welfare so that no one is in need; believers would take their possessions and lay them at the apostles feet for them to distribute to those in need. This approach highlights shared responsibility and the ethical use of resources within the community.

In contemporary times, some have used interpretations of New Testament scripture to validate capitalist or exploitative systems of economy. An example of this is the Prosperity Gospel, which claims that wealth and material possessions are indicative of God's approval and that belief can yield prosperity. This interpretation has been closely linked with capitalist ideologies that suggest accumulation of wealth as a direct correlation of spiritual success. Critics argue that this viewpoint twists biblical teaching,

[20] The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. (2001). *Matthew 25:14-30*. Crossway Bibles

propagating consumerism. It further argue that it overlooks the New Testament's emphasis on humility, generosity, and the ethical use of wealth. For instance, in Luke;

"Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"[21].

Jesus has powerful teaching on money, simple living and having our priorities in the right order in this passage. He passes them, listening when his followers tell him to sell his stuff, give away all their things to poor people, because they are climbs, pilgrims, in this life, and charity is eternal, but money is dust. When this happens, the needy are helped and believers are laying up treasures in heaven that will not fade away. The concept of "treasures in heaven" points to the idea that acts of kindness, charity, and spiritual devotion build a lasting reward, far superior to anything material on Earth.

The influence of these interpretations extends into societal and political realms. Movements advocating for the Prosperity Gospel have gained significant followings, particularly in the United States, leading to the proliferation of churches and ministries that promote this theology. These groups often attract substantial financial support, raising ethical concerns about the exploitation of followers, especially among the economically disadvantaged. On the other hand, the communal economic model of the early Christian community has inspired discussions on social equity and poverty alleviation[22].These early-practice communal experiences inspired some modern-day Christian communities to work for economic systems that focus on social justice and common good. Such debates frequently consider how the economic framework of capitalism can be aligned with the moral precepts of the New Testament, highlighting a tension between personal achievement and social accountability.

These opposing vantage points, if one may call them as such have led to reformist perspectives which suggest that the New Testament of Christian text be interpreted in ways that advance social equity, poverty alleviation, and communal economic responsibility. Focusing upon the New Testament teachings concerning stewardship and ethical conduct regarding money and resources, these perspectives claim that Christianity supports economic systems that care for the marginalized.Theological perspectives addressing economic justice and equity therefore require as part of the solution, a wedding together of an ability to discern the complexities of modern economies while staying true to the New Testament perspective on ethical living. In addition, this involves supporting policies that fight against poverty, support fair trade, and work toward the goal that economic systems serve the common good as set forth in the bible's call for love of neighbor and care for the vulnerable.

Comparative Analysis

While the economic principles in the Quran, Old and New Testament portray some similarities, each of them have distinct views and teachings on the issues of wealth,

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[21] The Holy Bible, New International Version. (2011). *Luke 12:33-34*. Zondervan
[22] Lui, K. H. (2024). *Christian Economics: My Conversation with a Bot on the Biblical Perspective of 21st Century Economics*. Phoenix Consulting.

poverty, and justice. The core idea in all three scriptures is that wealth ought to be used ethically and the affluent have a social and ethical responsibility to help the marginalized. In the Quran, Zakat (almsgiving) and Riba (usury) foster economic justice while simultaneously mitigating exploitation. The Old Testament, likewise, gives attention to economic justice like all other prophets, with emphasis on redistribution of economic resources such as during the Jubilee year in which debts are cleared and land is given back to the people who owned it. The teaching of Jesus in the New Testament makes it clear that materialism is detrimental, as he discusses the need of serving God over money, advocating to serve the poor as well. In spite of these principles and teachings shared, there is divergence in the relative emphasis of application to social order structures. The Quran, for example, supports fully developed economic outlines, meanwhile, the Old Testament provides moral guidance but is vague on specific practices regarding the economy. The New Testament prefers focusing on moral qualities and the change of heart of citizens instead of economic policies forcefully imposed by government or society.

There has always been extremism, and the teachings in these scriptures have been modified or abused to justify it economcially. For example, the Prosperity Gospel movement within Christianity takes the teachings of wealth in the New Testament and serves it as an argument for the capitalist overindulgence and accumulation of riches, disguising the vice as faith rewards. Also, in an Islamic context, certain radical economic movements which support Islamic socialism have emerged to extremelly redistribute wealth in compliance with some reinterpretations of the Quran's economic teachings. Although these movements claim that they are implemented in dire need of fulfilling the scripture's called justification ideals, they have been severely criticized for their out of context usage to support baffling thoughts that devastate order ideologies. In the Old Testament, literally advocates claim that the biblical mandate for charity and wealth some way and of wealth-sharing systems, hence adopting anti-capitalist, or socialist stances. These interpretations have been controversial and critics say such readings ignore and twist the intentions of the scripture whilst abusing their benevolent offer which is How to live within the present economically unjust society fairly.

Looking at it from a modern standpoint, it is quite easy to understand how extremism plays a part in shaping various economies around the world, especially in regions where religion is closely tied with politics. Economies in Muslim dominant regions interpret Quranic teachings in a way that supports Islamic socialism, which results in wealth redistribution and nation centered capitalist systems. On the other hand, various Christian influenced countries, especially in the US, have adopted economic policies influenced by the Prosperity Gospel, which later on blended into the every day political economy, merging conservative politics with capitalism. Such economies justify actively opposing anti-capitalist policies or defending the concentration of wealth in the hands of few. When integrated into political economy, religious extremism can be greatly responsible for shifts in public policy and opinion, most of the time dividing societies in how they prefer their economies structured. In some scenarios, the afforementioned movements have led to social and political violence due to economic systems existing on the radical interpretation of religious texts colliding with modern economics or societal

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norms. Understanding how these scriptures are interpreted and applied in modern contexts is crucial for assessing their impact on both local economies and global markets.

Conclusion

The examination of economic radicalism in all three religious texts – the Quran, the Old Testament, and the New Testament –shows some shared underlying ethical values and discrepancies in their implementation. Social justice alongside the allocation of wealth and the caring for the needy is a central issue for all three texts. At the same time, the Quran underscores economic elements like Zakat and the prevention of Riba, while the Old Testament focuses on the Jubilee year as a means to rebalance societal economics. In contrast, the New Testament shifts the focus to the spiritually wealthy, asking people to practice humility and generosity rather than accumulating material goods. Each scripture has a different approach towards economic ethics, some requesting central authority to intervene and redistribute wealth, while others emphasize individual virtue and social responsibility.

The application of these religious teachings to extreme versions of economic theory has given rise to movements that wish to fundamentally transform entire economic systems. Such movements often exemplify the selective interpretation of religious texts that, in context, would support highly disputable assumptions, but are instead taken out of context. Some religious beliefs have been used in modern times to either legitimize or attack capitalist frameworks, with some of those calling for the redistribution of money and others gifting it from top-tier business owners because of their religious favor. The repercussions of such misinterpretations are not only hypothetical, but are firmly grounded in the realities of the political and economic relations that govern countries of the world. In many cases, movements like these arise from deepening gaps in wealth and growing levels of discontent with any type of economic system, aiming to either firmly establish the current system or completely overhaul it.

The global effects of these rather extreme understandings varies widely, impacting conflict, public policy and the social circles. These ideologies greatly challenge the already established economic boundaries and suggest drastic reforms on how wealth is distributed and society is structured. In the future, it will be vital to find more rational approaches to religious texts that fit within the existing economic frameworks of today. Instead, scholars and leaders should harness these texts to promote radical compassion while safeguarding against great state misapplications that foster disruption. Corresponding research should offer fresh insights into the role religious teachings can play in constructive modern economic systems while addressing poverty, inequality and sustainability in bold readers of justice and compassion based on these revered scriptures.

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