



Capitalism as a Means of Alleviating Economic Complications: Evidence from the Quran

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ABSTRACT

It is widely suggested in the paradigm of capitalism that making the rich richer makes the rest of society richer as well, arguing therein that the very prerequisite to having a society with evenly distributed wealth is to be able to generate it beforehand. There is no denying, however, that, it is the rich who can strive on the investment front and create job opportunities. As such, it is argued that the prevalence of the wealthy is vital both for discovering market opportunities and for making the most out of these opportunities. In the long run, the poor can only get rich if their efforts make the rich richer than they already are. In the hypothetical pie of wealth, when a bigger slice of the pie is dedicated to the rich, the share of others may seem to decrease in the short term, but in the long run, the absolute volume of the poor will increase because the pie itself would have grown in size. Pro-capitalism scholars often argue that inequality of income tends to decrease in the advanced stages of the development of capitalism, getting stabilized at a sustained, and oftentimes highly acceptable, level. Achieving ubiquitous levels of growth, therefore, is only a matter of patience and sustained efforts. The purpose of the current study is to prove this intellectual basis, both theoretically and empirically. That is, capitalism has never been, or for that matter, will ever be, able to alleviate the complications of the poor. One can even argue that the opposite has even made more of a case. In addition, the resulting significant economic instability and unemployment have arguably piled more misery on the poor, in turn signifying that efficiency and justice have remained highly elusive within the capitalist paradigm. Through an essential understanding of human nature, the Holy Qur'an states that most people are inherently not welcoming of relinquishing their wealth to others, even their families, let alone their communities. That is, according to the Quran, humans like to accumulate and go over the figures: "...who amasses wealth and keeps an account of it." (Hamzah, 2).

Keywords: Capitalism, Quran, capital, economic problems, capitalist

1. The history of the originality of individual interest and ethics in economics

1.1. The course of economic ideas

Aristotle's *Politics* discusses the administration of cities, households, and property, with men, concluded by him to be "political animals", taking centerstage. According to him, the community is not an entity independent of individuals and cannot achieve prosperity without first maintaining that of the men therefrom. Therefore, one of the principles of capitalism, that is, the originality of the individual, is rooted in Aristotle's thoughts (Namazi, 2008, p. 46). Yet, he frames serving the people as a true goal for man, adding that "achieving this goal is proportional to the true greatness of the individual. This naturally results in a mind-frame that would go on to condemn any conduct or practice that is contrary to this attitude. An economy whose purpose is not to serve the masses and prescribes only the accumulation of wealth would be deemed in contrast to the greatness and wisdom of humanity (Madani, 1971, p. 7). Aristotle's approach to economics is best manifested in *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*. In the Aristotelian literature, economics is a subcategory of a broader field of thought that also encompasses politics and

ethics. Since 1240 AD, when Western Europe seems to have rediscovered Aristotle, *Nicomachusian Ethics* widely garnered the interest of the so-called scholastics, and through the study of moral philosophy in the aforementioned form, Scholastic economic thought emerged. Scholastic economics highly resembled that of Aristotelian economics (Langholm, 1979, 11-36). Scholastics also considered economics as a byproduct and even a subclass of broader moral-theological issues (Bari, 1975, p. 157). For instance, discussions and arguments on the rightfulness and legality of usury were mostly based on moral grounds (Hamouda and Price, 1997, pp. 191-216). Pamphleteer, who were later referred to as Mercantilists by Smith, were deemed the prevailing intellectual force of the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. In the majority of the works, they were generally introduced as politically-driven merchants who intended to influence government decisions. Although the discussion of their arguments is out of the scope of the current study, mercantilism left a clear chasm within the ethical views and teachings of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, and those of the Middle Ages in general (Galbraith, 1987, p. 37). Galbraith implicitly argues that the rise of mercantilism later became known as merchant capitalism, soon turned out to be the very origin of the departure of economics from the moral sciences. Although the influence of this school of thought on economic policies is incontestable, their intellectual dominance in economic matters in universities has never been established (Namati, 2014, p. 3).

Most commentators on the history of ideas (see Friedman, 1980, p. 19) claim, albeit for slightly different reasons, that modern economics emerged from the works of the renowned Scottish economist and philosopher, Adam Smith, during the late 1750s to the 1790s. his work in *The Wealth of Nations* is considered by many to be the first modern work that treats economics as a comprehensive independent system that was knowingly separated from the philosophy of ethics and theology (Irwin, 1972). To be precise, it should be said that during the last century, positivists were the main proponents of Smith's works, as it was where they sought to discover their beliefs and values (Dose, 1998: pp. 98-142). During this period, the political economy gradually became a specialized field with the emergence of specialist clubs, academic associations and science journals, and university forums, resulting in a distinct narrowing of topics that facilitated the transition of the political economy toward fully-fledged economics. Part of the reason for these changes can be found in the claim that specialization can produce great effects on social thought.

A competing point of view emerged during the same timeline, the proponents of which argued that the economy is not only becoming specialized, but also it is trying to adopt new methods of natural sciences, most particularly, mathematics. Finally, during the 19th century, when it became clear that researchers in other branches of moral sciences did not intend to adopt the methods of natural sciences, there was enough potential to separate from these sciences. In many cases, the inadequacy of these methods was identified (Keynes, 1971: pp. 181-262). The distinction that emerged between the methods used in moral sciences, natural sciences, and economics continued to different degrees until the present century.

1.2. Quranic worldview in economics

It is only logical to assume that the structures and goals derived from different worldviews would be highly different as well. In the divine worldview, the most significant elements that prevent humans from intruding on the rights of others are pure faith and piety. Faith opens up a



new window to another realm that extends the experience of people beyond the current world. Allameh Tabatabai argues that the strongest promoter of enforcement of the law is the high morals of a human being who performs his duty in solitude, as the police and any other law enforcement force can only maintain order on the surface. Apart from piety, there is no other genuine force that can stop humans from following the whims of the soul and force them to give up individual pleasures (Tabatabai, Vol. 4, pp. 173-174).

Some Islamic scholars consider utilitarianism as one of the major motives for people to practice piety, and they say that because man is under the influence of this motive, it is possible that religion can help to satisfy the desires and benefit him and prevent his losses, this is enough to make him try to know God (Mesbah Yazdi, 1982, vol. 4, p.37). The Holy Qur'an has acknowledged this potential in humans and even has sought to employ it to educate humans at different levels (Mesbah Yazdi, 1998, vol. 3, p. 293).

The world is the breeding grounds of the hereafter, and one of the tools of this breeding grounds is capital and wealth, which can be very useful in the hereafter, but some people find the truth late. Then, people will regretfully say “I wish I had realized in this world that life in this world and all the blessings that I have had were for testing” (Fajr, 24).

Human life in this world is based on interest in wealth, power, children, and leadership, which prevents a person from thinking about his path and attaining spiritual virtue, and doing something for his life after death. Hosseini Hamdani and Behbodhi, 2001, vol.18, p.135). God is incomparable, so believers should only trust in Him and rely on no one other than Him, wealth and children being no exception (Taghabon, 4, 13, and 15).

2. Personal interest does not lead to social interest

2.1. The relationship between individual benefit and social benefit in the capitalist economy

During the period between 1741 and 1776, a school of thought called physiocrats or naturalists was formed in the field of economic thinking. Physiocracy is derived from the Greek meaning “government of nature”. According to naturalists, natural laws are the best existing and imaginable laws for society, the economy, and ultimately human well-being. According to the arguments of naturalists, when a person naturally moves in line with his interests, the society, which includes all human beings, can achieve maximum benefits in the same way, adding the notion that nature is not random and is born of divine will (Ghafari and Ashtiani, p. 65).

If the economic activity of each ends up benefiting society, it is clear that such a practice should be left to function seamlessly (Anikin, p. 256). This was the same hypothesis that Smith offered in dismissing the mercantilism of that era, that is, people should be left completely free to move around their capital based on their interests and to use their labor in any field that they find beneficial. It is established on the premise that people with a high level of freedom act in a way that will surely benefit society. This worldview seeks to segregate the sphere of economic life from that of social life, effectively ignoring the effects of society on humans. At the most abstract and philosophical level, the economic science derived from this worldview would be based on speculation rather than comparative and inductive approaches (Foley, 2013: pages 15 and 17). The very foundation of the Physiocratic school was political support for enlightened despotism, which François Quesnay explained as follows obtaining the maximum profit through the maximum reduction in expenses, which is deemed the perfect state in the economy. In a fully functioning economy, the scope of personal interest is not highly distinct from that of public interest, in this case, the world moves by itself and the desire to enjoy and profit in society creates



a constant optimum-seeking tendency, and hence, people should let such dynamism work its charm (Hosseini, 2013, p. 212).

2.2. Personal benefit, the result of charity

Divine worldview has numerously sought to establish that although people can achieve their desired goal according to their efforts, they should keep in mind that what they spend from their capital for their fellows in the name of God would eventually lead to their benefit. No effort goes unrewarded and it may be given to any person in the form of wealth (Layl, 19). Giving money pleases God and people. This satisfaction is the reward of that work: “Rather [the spender with piety spends his wealth in the way of God] to obtain the pleasure of his Lord, and [undoubtedly] soon he will be pleased [by receiving His grace, mercy and infinite reward].” (Layl, 20, 21).

Giving in charity can be owing to motivations of fame and boasting or because the reward of giving out is receiving in, that is, exchange of favors. Sometimes giving is done with the purpose of business and profit. An instance of such a scenario is politicians helping in charity projects near election days to win over people’s votes. However, believers only consider the contentment of God while practicing charity (Mughniyeh, vol. 8, p. 124).

Contrary to what is seems from spending and giving money, that is, reducing wealth, it is better for the people (Taghabon, 16). Miserliness is a reprehensible human trait that, is the protection against which can lead humans to salvation and redemption (ibid.).

Smith argues that providing the interests of individual members of the society simply guarantees the interests of the society, as he, rather optimistically, argues that the dependence of the members of the society on each other moderates, at least to some extent, the instinct of utilitarianism, and individuals have to provide the interests of other members of the society to have their interests sustained. This optimism of Smith is perhaps owing to the principles that he borrowed from natural sciences, that is, the agreement in nature that is present between its numerous forces. It is noteworthy however that society is not the collective sum of its people and the virtue of free is what distinguishes the human world from the natural world. There is no cruelty and collusion in the social lives of ants or bugs, but humans are free, in the will, to oppress each other and to crush the interests of their fellows (Alam al-Hoda and Tavakoli, 2015, p. 10).

Humans are like this, as the Qur'an states “when good comes to a group of people, they forbid it from others and have a strong sense of possessiveness towards it” (Me’raj, 21).

In a materialistic and superficial worldview towards property and capital, any out-giving of wealth is purely unacceptable, with greed getting in the way of any form of charity (Ghulam 23, 24). “They started moving while whispering to each other” (23) “The poor shall not enter the garden today.” (24)

Worshipping God is related to giving money (Ghulam, 28). Greed and gluttony make people blind and deaf to the point of rebelling and no longer accepting the truth and committing mistakes (Ghulam, 31): “Woe to us who have been rebellious” (31) “And when he gets wealth and prosperity, he becomes very stingy and restraining”. (Ghulam, 21). Those who have comfort and prosperity are still trying to increase their wealth. “He desires to increase his wealth even more.” God does not like any arrogant boaster, those who not only do not give out in charity but also show off with their wealth and funds. “Worship Allah and do not ascribe any partners to Him, and be good to parents, the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the near neighbor and the distant



neighbor, the companion at your side, the wayfarer, and your slaves. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are arrogant and boastful”

The Holy Quran has dismissed pretentious charity, considering it on par with not giving charity at all yet having the companionship of Satan. “Those who give their wealth in charity to show off, and do not believe in God and the Hereafter, and they are the companions of Satan, whomever the devil is his companion is undoubtedly a bad companion (Nesa, 38). And what would happen to them if they believed in God and the Last Day and spent from what God provided for them, and God was All-Knowing? And God is always aware of them (Nesa, 39). Although spending money on charity seems in conflict with the accumulation of capital, God has promised to multiply in rewards the spent capital. Allah does not oppress anyone even the slightest, doubles the rewards of any good done, and gives a great reward from Himself (Nesa, 40).

All mammonists are like that. Their thirst will never be quenched, and if they place the seven realms under their jewels, they still go after other realms (Makaram Shirazi et al., 2008, vol. 25, p. 225). A person's attitude can affect whether or not he benefits from blessings, including wealth and capital “But man, when his Lord tests him and honors him and bestows his blessings, he says: My Lord honored me [as I was worthy of it]. And when he tests him and makes his sustenance tight for him, he says: My Lord has humiliated me.” (Fajr, 15-16).

All people are placed on a quest to increase their wealth. Man should forgive freely and willingly, not unwillingly and reluctantly. Quran demands believers not to condescend [kindness to others] even if [it is] great and abundant (Modasser, 6). It is cited in Qommi's interpretation that regarding this verse, Abi al-Jaroud states that one should never give something and expect something bigger in return (Ali bin Ibrahim, 1984, vol. 2, p. 39). The public image of a wealthy person is that his presence in society should not be unceremonious. “And they said ‘What kind of prophet is this who eats like the rest and walks in the markets? Why did not an angel come down to him to accompany him in his duties?’” (Forghan, 8). “Or [why] there is no treasure bestowed upon him? Or is there, not a garden for him to benefit from? the wrongdoers said: [O people!] You do not follow but a bewitched man (ibid.).”

Moses is said to believe that the deceptive wealth and capital of Pharaoh and his entourage misguided his people into obeying him (Yunes, 88). The believers must resist the temptations the wealth of the capitalists may exhibit, those who do not know that there are more valuable assets than wealth (Younes, 89). Believers should always have in mind that God's will is greater than everything and every hub of capitalism and power (Younes, 90).

Some cultural and religious centers were initially established by capitalists for utilitarian purposes and challenging divine commands (Tobeh, 107). The Ansar and the Muhajirun (lit., the followers and the helpers) were the symbols of those who sacrificed themselves and left their wealth, and shared their wealth to please God (Tobeh, 101). Some people have a lot of capital but do not use it properly. These possessions will be the source of their torment in this world (Tobeh, 85).

3. Pursuing personal gain is not a rational and wise behavior

Many economic theorists argue that human behavior is driven by selfishness and animalistic instincts. By proposing the motive of self-interest in humans and its tandem with social interest, Smith depicted a rational human being whose selfish behaviors are adjusted by social interest



(Smith, 1759, p. 128). The development of microeconomic theories also indicates the introduction of this approach. It was impossible to establish microeconomics without the assumption of a utilitarian consumer. The analysis of microeconomics starts with the recognition of a rational human being who is faced with various decisions to improve his utility. This utility-seeking attitude forms the demand curve. The second side of microeconomics also introduces a type of producer who always seeks to maximize his profit. The production behavior of a profit-seeking firm also shapes the supply curve. The intercept point of the two curves represents the optimum that satisfies the consumer's desirability and the producer's profitability. Therefore, microeconomics is completely based on human beings. The theory of microeconomics considers a person who does not act like this to be irrational. (Maghsoudi and Amiri Tehrani, 2017, p. 68). In the Qur'anic view, human life is eternal, and hence personal interests should not be deemed limited to this world, yet their opportunity window in this world is highly limited. That is, those who delay charity may end up dying before succeeding in doing so (Monafeghun, 10). The hereafter people wish that they could back to the material world, regretting the time and the money they didn't spend on charity and other virtuous deeds and hence be accounted as being among the righteous (ibid.). Everyone's demise is certain and there is no delay when the call to it arrives, and God is also aware of the actions of all His servants. As such, the opportunity to live in this world should be taken not for granted, people should remember God and practice charity instead of being entertained with possessions (Monafeghun, 10).

The Holy Quran reminds us that although various individuals of great wealth have used these resources to their whims, their works have suffered great losses in this world and will be such in the hereafter, (Tobeh, 69). Throughout history, there have been big groups and big capitalists whose actions caused their destruction and did not end well (Tobeh, 70).

According to the Quran, feeding the poor and spending money on charity, in general, is not deemed reasonable by most people. There are certain times in life that only after the destruction and annihilation of material capital, for example, the agricultural products of a garden, man realizes that God is the real owner of blessings and material capital and that the durability and stability of the blessings are not guaranteed (Kahf, 42). Apart from God, no group or force can help people in keeping and preserving their capital (Kahf, 43).

4. Making the rich richer doesn't make the rest any rich

Making the rich richer doesn't make the rest any rich. If allocating more shares to the rich benefits the rest of society, the rich should be forced into investing more and as a result grow more through policies such as reducing the tax burden of the rich and mega-corporations on the condition of investment and then distributing the benefits through mechanisms such as the welfare plans (Chang, 2019, p. 232). The value of humans in a market-based economy is determined in the same way as the value of anything else would, i.e., by tradability in the market. In this situation, man sees himself as something that must be successfully employed in the market. His perception of value depends on his success, that is, on whether he can sell himself well. Can he achieve more than what he was in the beginning? Is he successful? His body, his mind, and his soul are his capital, and his quest in life is to invest them satisfactorily to make a profit (Namazi, 2007, p. 132).

Any capitalist regime would prefer its survival to that of the current or prospective generations of humans, hence the demolition of the environment, waged wars, and the production of



weapons of mass destruction, and all of these are not only permissible in the capitalist paradigm, but also at times even deemed obligatory under fitting conditions (Darakhshan, 1400, p.33). The functioning of capitalism shows that benefit drives the system, not utility. Personal profit harms public welfare (Ingham, 2018, page 292). The issue of how rewards and rewards should be distributed in a capitalist society is a fundamental issue of social progress. These rewards are unequal and unfair. The basic assumption in market individualism is that people are nothing unless they find a job that has a wage or salary (Kiavand, 2008, p. 7).

Quran has time and again implied that wealth and children are sources of worldly power. As such, it seeks to alter the envious attitude of common people towards capitalists of the society by establishing this notion that capital spent undue will lead to nothing but fire, misguidance, and misery for the holder: “Do not follow any evil person who swears a lot, leaves no stone unturned to gossip and tittle-tattle and has unknown lineage, only because he is the owner of wealth and children.” (Ghulam, 10-14) disbeliever and those who disobey God are due no respect and should not be given social status because they have not done or will do anything for the benefit of society (Touba, 81 and 82). Idling and not being productive in society and economy and not doing good to others are condemned by the Qur'an (Toba, 83). Some believers may not seek to strive, but those who strive have more virtue and superiority with their property and lives (Nesa, 95). God has given those who wage Jihad with their property and lives a great position and rank over those who idle. And he has promised each [of these two groups] a fine recompense [because of their faith and righteous deeds], but those who strive are given priority over those who stay at home [without excuse] (ibid.). Those who spend from property have more virtue than others (Nesa, 34).

4.1. A small group interest instead of the general interest of the society

It should be pointed out that from Smith's point of view, a person not only does not seek social benefits but beyond that, he should not seek social benefits. The classical economic theory evolved on labor, in other words, they considered value to be the result of work, that is, if the production of commodity x required two days of work and the production of commodity y required one day, then x had twice the value of y.

Marx raised a historical question in this regard that had the potential to disrupt economic liberalism. He argued that it is not fair to attribute the added value obtained from the performance of the workers to the pockets of capitalists, which is essentially his criticism of capitalism (Hamilton, p. 75; Tafazzoli, 2008, p. 83). The prerequisite to the capitalist regime is that the economic affairs of the society be wholly delegated to certain people. This essentially means that not only the society would be best represented as a duality of haves and not-haves, but also the haves would be able to shape the social economy in any way they see fit, that is economic dictatorship. (Motahari, 2000, p. 216).

A common concern of numerous economic theorists such as Durkheim, Marshall, Marx, Mill, Veblen, and Weber was that although industrial capitalism has the potential to generate huge amounts of capital, they are often left in the possession of a select few, leaving an extremely high share of the society unbenefited (Kiavand, 2002, p. 5). Global markets reward productive assets and punish those without assets (especially in inflationary conditions) (Birdsall, 2005, p. 121). The effect of the exclusivity of properties to a few on the labor is similar to that of a whip on slaves who have nothing and are forced to work immediately, otherwise, they will die of hunger. He cannot work without the means of production and capital that belong to the capitalist, so he



has to work for the capitalist, that is, hand over the majority of the product of his work to him (Challaye, p. 35).

According to Marx, the capitalist society is built on the shoulder of the workers. The worker can not get his real share of the profit from the sale of products therein. Yet, given that the system is mostly ruined by the employer, the workers cannot demand a surplus share of their salary. The capitalist manager can easily repel raise-asking requests by influencing the social relations of production. The employer must accumulate more raw materials, machinery, and capital to maintain his exploitative conduct. It is often concluded that the weakening of the proletariat is directly correlated to the increase of capital (Marx, 1978, pp. 255-258). That is, in the capitalist society, the one who works has nothing, and the one who earns something does not work (Marx and Engels, 2000, p. 296).

Today, millions of Americans and Europeans lack the conveniences of the post-industrial era aimed at improving lives. This is the result of the military, cultural, political, and economic regime that has sustained the industrial-era mindset and hence has long served sectarian interests instead of serving the public and common interests. (Kiavand, 2001, p. 10). In such regimes, companies, factories, offices, and stores are organized undemocratically. A minority at the top of the wealth and power hierarchy, including owners, minority shareholders, and top managers, make key decisions for employees (the majority of the company) and are not accountable to them (Richard Wolff, 2000). Scholars seem to have failed to comprehend the true nature of macroeconomics. In many cases, helping an economy grow makes the people at the top of the hierarchy richer while those who are positioned at the bottom of the hierarchy are left behind. Indeed, support for capitalism often results in societal arrangements that highly resemble medieval feudal societies. Scholars are dismissive of these notions, probably because the colleges are managed or financed by mega-corporations (Perkins, 2015, p. 68).

God is the sole provider, but most people are shallow in their attitude (Saba, 36). Those drowned in consumption become proud of what they have (that is, property and children) and are dismissive of the truth (Saba, 34). People are deceived by the many blessings some people have and even follow them blindly to utmost disbelief as a result of this seduction (Saba, 33). In most cases, people of power and wealth do nothing to coerce others to their whims, but the masses are tempted to do so on their own (Saba, 32). The best role model for people who believe in God and the Day of Judgment is the Messenger of God, and people should not choose capitalists as role models under any circumstances (Parties, 21). Accrual of wealth and property by a limited few is perilous, that's why the spoils and riches obtained from deeds belong to God, His Messenger, kinsfolks, those in need, and wayfarers, the management of which is assigned to the Prophet (Hashr, 7). God has asked the believers to trust the Prophet regarding the division of property, that is, to accept whatever their determined share is and to give up on whatever is forbidden, and to be pious (ibid.). Those who are undue in taking and possessing wealth and want a larger share of public property should practice divine piety and keep in mind that God is severe in punishment and will punish their exorbitance (ibid.). As a modern-day implication, governments should pay more attention to the weak and vulnerable strata of society from the source of public revenues. The Prophet represented the role of the government in Early Islam and had the task of distributing wealth and public assets among different groups of society. The



salvation of the people in this world and the hereafter relies on getting in harmony with God, in which case, the apparent loss of one's property does not cause him to fail (Hashr, 1).

4.2. The benefit of man is in benefiting his fellow species

In *Economic Philosophy*, Joan Robinson argues that when nature prepared a man for society, it equipped him with an innate desire to make his fellows happy and an innate aversion to their resentment. Nature taught him to feel pleasure from the happiness of his fellows and to feel pain from their unhappiness. He made the approval of his peers pleasant and desirable to him and made their disapproval very painful for him (Smith, 2018, p. 180).

On the Day of Resurrection, everyone earned in full what he has done and is deserved to. No one behaving cruelly or unjustly. Those who have given out things in charity will not suffer and God will give them back to them again (Al-Baqarah, 280). God's preaching is that usury has bad economic and psychological consequences for the individual and the society, and contrary to what it seems in helping to accumulate more capital, it is financially harmful to society. Therefore, believers should avoid it, or they will suffer eternal hell (Al-Baqarah, 275).

God has made charity the social mechanism through which the wealth of alms-giving believers can grow (Al-Baqarah, 261). In verse 261 of Al-Baqarah, God has offered an example with implications that are not only exclusive to the hereafter but also applicable to the material world: "God will build upon your charity". Rational understanding also approves this, as the person who devotes something from his possessions, although at first, it may occur to him that it is gone and will not return to him, through some insight, one can see that human society is like a single body with different members that are ultimately united in the purpose and goal of life. Individuals are all related to each other like organs of the body, in that, when one organ is plagued with complications that lead to hindered performance, although it may seem that only one organ is affected, in reality, it is the entire body that is affected. Likewise, giving alms to the poor cleanse their heart from vices and their tongue from blasphemy. These benefits accrue to the entire society as its members form a network in which performing good deeds will have a resonating effect. The effects may even become pronounced for deeds that are aimed at essential needs like hygiene and education. These are the effects and benefits of charity. Resources dedicated in way of God for the sake of His contentment have no way but to grow, while resources that are spent in ways not meant to satisfy God are doomed to vanish. Those whose intention of dedicating their resources is not the pleasure of God, but rather repelling the evil of the poor or some other worldly motive, can be claimed to be manipulative in their conduct, which may even lead to bad blood, unrest, and turmoil between the rich and the poor. The bad effects are promised to evade those who genuinely seek to please God with their deeds, which would then be called "pure good" (Tabatabai, vol.2, p.596). Goodness is not worshiping, but goodness is true faith in God, the Last Day, the angels, the Holy Quran, and prophets, and giving away wealth and funds, even though it is to your dislike, to your relatives, orphans, travelers, beggars, for cultural affairs (Al-Baqarah, 177). Giving capital to the deserving and those who need it is the same as doing good (ibid.).

Man's ultimate take from wealth is to lift his status in the hereafter, yet, man is required by religion not to neglect his share of the world. Just as God has blessed men with capital and wealth, man is asked to be kind to others (Ghesas, 77). All those who were once powerful and rich throughout history had to at one point give them all up, but what remains of them is their conduct and their consequences, which will haunt them forever (ibid.).



Gharoon became a symbol of wealth that used to amaze consumerist people with the magnificence of his properties, such that they longed for such wealth when they saw them (Ghesas, 79).

Vigorous and industrious economic work that actively seeks to avoid damaging the environment and society will result in prosperity, albeit at the expense of several sacrifices (Tobe, 81 and 82).

5. The consequences of the originality of personal benefit

5.1. Exploitation of people in society

The advent of civil society along with its regulations posed further yoke on the poor and became a source of power for the rich, who were then able to permanently strengthen the laws of exploitative property and inequalities. This raised the notion of usurpation of an undisputed property right and locked a great majority of human beings in a miserable state for the benefit of a small minority (Rousseau, 1983, p. 151). Among the ways to maximize profits is to reduce wages, and to exploit consumers by monopolizing markets or collusion and lack of government supervision (Motahari, 2000, p. 140).

The notion of exploitation in capitalism is borne out of the worldly view of the economy (Noorahmadi, 2009, p. 220). The attitude and behaviors of high officials in financial and economic companies, and bank owners highly resemble those of their counterparts in savage societies, which include cruel and brutal behavior, the pursuit of personal interests, the pursuit of family interests, lack of intelligence, and incompetence, and recourse to force and fraud (Saul, p. 197).

Throughout history, the owners of capital disobeyed God's prophets, "They disobeyed the apostle of their Lord, so He seized them with a terrible seizing." (Hagheh, 10). Those who form an interventionist regime to beleaguer people be severely punished by God "...And Pharaoh and those who were before him and the people of the quake-stricken cities [Lot's people] committed great sins. The wealth and capital of the people of Ad and Thamud could not prevent divine punishment. "But the people of Thamud perished with a rebellious punishment" (Hagheh, 5).

Autocratic regimes, and in general the owners of power and wealth, lay waste and misery on the society especially the poor (Naml, 34). Around every axis of power and wealth, some people benefit and obey, and are thus willing to blindly follow the orders of this axis, failing to note that the source of every power and wealth is God (Naml, 33). It is elsewhere stated in Quran that they "considered some to be equal to the Lord of the worlds."

Satan rules over the disbelievers and makes them obsessed with their actions and their children, rendering them dismissive of God. They become the followers of the devil, for which they suffer great losses (Mojadaleh, 19). Believers are those who have utmost trust and faith in God and His rightful Prophet and have no doubt about it, to such lengths that they are willing to fight with their wealth and their lives in the way of God (Hojorat, 15). Believers who are prepared to devote their wealth and lives are truly honest (ibid). Those who spend their wealth and lives in the way of God will not suffer, and God will reward them in return (Hojorat, 14).

5.2. Decline of Economic and social justice in the society

The pursuit and accumulation of wealth by individuals and mega-corporations as the ultimate goal leads to a world in which they are excused from their social duties. As such, bankers and managers of direct or indirect investment funds are effortlessly tolerated to crush jobs, shut down



factories, destroy the environment and disrupt the financial system for personal wealth (Chang, 2019, p. 389).

The most straightforward path to maximizing profits for any company is to reduce costs, as it is by far harder to increase revenues than to reduce costs. This, in turn, can be realized, by downsizing the staff and reducing capital costs through minimizing investment (Chang, 2020, p. 55). In a capitalist society where maximizing personal profit and the market volume is highly sought-after, people become highly inclined to schemes that are claimed to yield the most profit, almost regardless of their moral and/or social consequences. Therefore, if every person is subject to this mindset, there would simply be no guarantee for the fair distribution of incomes among the member and meaningful construction and development. This is highly reflected by the works of modern economists whose evidence for the Western capitalist society remains inconclusive, let alone an absolute capitalist society. The latter would simply capitalize on the growth and advancement of its technology to achieve the maximum profit (Najjarzadeh et al., 2008, p. 27). Justice has been one of the main reasons for dispatching prophets, and divine religions in their wake, with the argument that maintaining justice over the society preserves the rights of its members (Hadid, 25). Indeed, the pious enjoy gardens and fountains and other blessings of God, while thinking about the prosperity of their hereafter as well, for which they give up sleep and other worldly possessions (Zariyat, 15-19). The Prophet of God has warned against indulging in the pursuit of wealth and its consequences: “Get up and Warn” (Modasser, 2). The Quran requires believers to confront the powerful and arrogant with the word of truth and say to them “You are misguided and criminals, and if you insist on your misguidance, you will soon become humiliated” (Mughniyeh, 2011, Vol. 7, p. 761).

Quran argues that the outcasts constantly seek to plot new schemes against the people to steal their capital. The nonbelievers (owners of wealth and position) are afraid of abandoning their idols because they are the beneficiaries of this tradition. The behavior of the rich leads people astray (Nuh, 24). It is stated in Quran regarding the nonbelievers that “because of their wrongs they were drowned, then made to enter the fire, so they did not find any helpers besides Allah” (Nuh, 25). What are the sins of the rich and the oppressors, and what is the relationship between accumulating wealth and the notion of drowning employed in this verse?

The act of urging others to feed is an indicator of belief in God: “Indeed he had no faith in Allah, the All-supreme, and he did not urge the feeding of the needy,” (Hagheh, 33). The greatest cause of man's demise is his withdrawal from God and the people. This interpretation applies to many aspects of life as most of the Sharia commands can be summarized in these two. The correlation between feeding the poor and faith in the Qur'an establishes the utmost importance of this great human act. Many Islamic scholars argue that the worst creed is *kufir* and the worst moral vice is *Bukhl* (lit. stinginess). It is interesting that “not feeding” is not the issue here, but urging others to feed. This illustrates, among others that, firstly, only feeding one person does not solve the problem of the poor, and the whole community should be urged to conduct similarly; secondly, not everyone can feed, but everyone can urge to feed; and thirdly, stingy people are such that only they do not give alms, but also can't see others do so (Makarem Shirazi, 2008, vol. 24, p. 470).

3.5. Social and economic inequalities

There is no denying that countries that seek to implement capitalism achieve long-term prosperity and high economic growth, yet, the poor remains highly plagued with financial



complications. Income and wealth inequality has increased instead of decreasing. In addition, the resulting significant economic instability and unemployment have arguably piled more misery on the poor, in turn signifying that efficiency and justice have remained highly elusive within the capitalism paradigm (Chapra, 2005, p. 141). Social and economic inequalities and differences in incomes and wealth between social groups have always been both the cause and the effect in many realms (Piketty, 2016, p. 390).

In his magnum opus, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Thomas Piketty has employed documents, evidence, statistics, and figures to indicate that the implementation of neoliberal policies over the past few decades has propelled the inequality in the distribution of wealth at the global level to a historical height, on par with that of the 1900-1914 period, with a clear possibility of even surpassing it (Piketty, 2016, p. 698). Over the past few decades, neoliberal economists and universities in most of the rich capitalist countries, who themselves have been major proponents of extreme capitalism, have developed a reactionist notion that conflicts with the entire history of economic thought: since the rich and capitalists are the source of development and employment for the entire society, they should be taxed less than ordinary people (Piketty, 2016, p. 863).

It remains highly bewildering that, despite the neoliberal reforms in policies that were claimed to accelerate economic growth, the average per capita growth in developing countries plummeted from 2.5% per year during the period 1960-79 to 0.3% for years 1980-99 (Easterly, 2001, p. 154).

Kuznets has argued in his works that the existing income inequality, both at the national and global levels, can be alleviated over time through the so-called trickle-down effect. That is, any interfering effort aimed at mitigating inequality in the early stages of growth would be counterproductive, as the allocation of income, from the rich (with their high marginal desire to invest), to the poor (with their low marginal desire to invest and hence their high marginal desire to consume) leads to an increase in consumption and thus a decrease in the funds required to finance capital accretion. Therefore, initial inequality and access to capital accumulation is a necessary conditions for high economic growth in the early stages of economic development. In the later stages, where the rate of capital accumulation intensifies and, the demand for labor increases, wage rates grow as well, consequently leading to a lessened gap between income labor and capital (Simon Kuznets, 1993, p. 96).

Contrary to Kuznets' hypothesis, the free-market mechanism cannot be expected to ultimately mitigate inequality and alleviate poverty at the national level, as long as the distribution of wealth is disturbed, to begin with. In the absence of the government or appropriate redistribution policies, the functioning of the free-market system tends to intensify inequalities. Marx's argument, that capital, is an indicator of the unequal social relationship between the haves and have-nots are not a totally fallacious statement. Smith also clearly declares in *Wealth of Nations* that inequality is high in places of high (concentration of) ownership, as the abundance of wealth leads to poverty and nothingness for some (Dini, 2008, p. 12).

Man-made crafts and structures, no matter how wide and numerous they are, do not match the level of divine creations, and, humans should be careful not to neglect the financial rights of the weak people in society (Asra, 37). Self-conceit and selfishness in having wealth and capital are displeasing to God and lead to divine displeasure, that is, "The evil of all these is detestable to



your Lord” (Asra, 38). Spending money on cultural and social affairs is a sign of faith and brings about profound prosperity (Balad, 10-18).

Social collaboration and society-wide interaction to alleviate complications in the society and call for good deeds please God and attracts divine mercy (Tobeh, 71). God's deeds are all based on wisdom. The social and economic cooperation of the members of the society and the indisposition of individuals to dominate the spending of funds results in a financially developed society (Tobeh, 70). Yet, giving capital is not accepted by God in a forced and disgusted manner (Tobeh, 54). Some people's charity is not sincere, and God does not accept insincerity (Tobeh, 53). Those who believe in God and the Last Day voluntarily fight for the cause of God with their wealth and lives (Tobeh, 44).

Economic and social power fascinates people, even if it's wrongful most of the time. Historically, prophets have opposed the conduct of wealthy and power-hungry falsifiers: “They have disobeyed me, following someone whose wealth and children only add to his loss... and they have devised an outrageous plot” (Gheraati, 10, p. 22).

The abundance of wealth and capital may deceive the general public, but they have only themselves to blame because they forgot that only God is the provider (Saba, 31). The means of helping God is to use his sustenance in the right way, and for those who do this, God will help them in return (Saf, 14). God guides the believers to a prosperous occupation, one that protects them from divine punishment, in that if the believers help the religion of God in this world with their limited resources such as life and property, God will also save them from punishment in this world and the hereafter (Saf, 10). It is required in the Quran that while delivering the inheritance among the relatives, the poor, that is, those who do not get any inheritance, are due a proper sum of wealth (Nesa, 6). Capitals are transferred between various people according to different laws, one of which is inheritance (Nesa, 7). The charity of unbelievers has the opposite result and does not have a positive result (Al-Imran, 117).

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