



The Phenomenon of Modern Hedonism (Abdullah Saeed's Contextual Hermeneutics Analysis of Surah at-Takatsur)

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Abstract

This research aims to understand the phenomenon of modern hedonism through the lens of Abdullah Saeed's contextual hermeneutics of Surah At-Takatsur in the Qur'an. The main focus of this research is to analyze how the interpretation of Surah At-Takatsur can provide deep insights into the hedonistic attitudes that are developing in contemporary society. The method used in this research is qualitative with a contextual hermeneutics approach, which emphasizes understanding the Qur'anic text within the current social and cultural context. Data were obtained through literature review and analysis of social phenomena such as wealth display on social media and consumption of luxury goods. This research reveals that the phenomenon of modern hedonism, reflected in various consumerist practices and displays of wealth, can be understood as a result of humanity's efforts to achieve high social status, without realizing that worldly life is temporary. Abdullah Saeed, in his hermeneutic analysis, emphasizes the importance of freeing oneself from the obsession with materialism and focusing on higher life goals, namely the attainment of true happiness through deeper relationships with God and fellow human beings.

The results show that the phenomenon of modern hedonism is rooted in the imbalance between material and spiritual needs. The practice of flaunting wealth on social media, excessive consumption, and obsession with branded goods reflect humanity's desire for social recognition, which often leads to dissatisfaction and inner turmoil. The implication of this research is the importance of character education that focuses on spiritual and social values, which can be initiated early in families, schools, religious institutions, through education, digital literacy, religious institutions, and government policies.

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INTRODUCTION

A person's lifestyle is often greatly influenced by their economic status. Checi Arum Septiani revealed that an increase in economic status tends to be accompanied by a shift in lifestyle towards a more luxurious way of living, often referred to as a hedonistic lifestyle. Hedonism, in this case, is a behavior that prioritizes material pleasure and luxury. However, this change does not always bring positive effects. Someone who is accustomed to a hedonistic lifestyle will be more vulnerable to mental pressure, especially when experiencing a decline in economic conditions. Conversely, individuals with lower economic status tend to live more simply, in accordance with their limitations. This phenomenon indicates a close relationship between a person's economic condition and the lifestyle they adopt (Septiani, 2021). In response to this issue, Misbahul Munir explained that a hedonistic lifestyle has long been a concern in various spiritual traditions, including Sufism. The Sufi movement emerged as a response to the behavior of society that was overly oriented towards luxury and worldly pleasures. The practice of *uzlah* (withdrawing from worldly life) and the attitude of *zuhud* (simplicity in life) taught in Sufism become ways to counter the negative influence of hedonism. This spiritual approach offers a solution for individuals to control their consumer tendencies while also helping to rebuild more positive values in society (Munir, 2021).

In addition to economic and spiritual factors, technological development also plays an important role in strengthening the hedonistic lifestyle in the modern era. Dushe Maria Carolina and colleagues highlight how online shopping platforms like Shopee have changed consumer patterns. With the ease of transactions, attractive promotions, and wide access, people are often encouraged to make impulsive purchases. This digital technology reinforces consumer behavior and amplifies the impact of a hedonistic lifestyle, especially if users do not use this technology wisely. This phenomenon shows how technology can act as a catalyst in reinforcing excessive lifestyles (Carolina et al., 2024). The phenomenon of hedonism is also not free from the influence of global culture, especially Western culture that enters through various media. Hastiani et al. revealed that teenagers in Indonesia now tend to adopt a Western lifestyle, characterized by the erosion of values of politeness, changes in communication styles, and a luxurious lifestyle that does not match their financial capabilities. In facing this challenge, it is important to reconstruct traditional values as a local cultural identity that can provide a balance between modernity and morality (Hastiani et al., 2019).

In the context of globalization, Desi Erika Purba highlights the clubbing lifestyle that is popular among students. This activity is considered a way to relieve stress, but in reality, this lifestyle often leads to wastefulness and prioritizes momentary pleasure. This phenomenon illustrates how the culture of hedonism has infiltrated the younger generation, with negative consequences that not only affect their mental health but also their academic performance (Purba & Amal, 2022). Hedonism is now even considered a norm among Generation Z, as stated by Suparwi. Information technology media popularize this lifestyle through various platforms, from social media to digital advertisements. Although this lifestyle often provides motivation and inspiration, its negative impacts, such as excessive consumerism and moral degradation, cannot be ignored. Therefore, education based on Pancasila values becomes important to restore awareness of social and moral responsibilities (Suparwi et al., 2023).

The role of modern media in shaping societal lifestyles is also a concern for Timotius Haryono. According to him, the emotional benefits offered by a hedonistic lifestyle are often more appealing than functional benefits. As a result, society is more inclined to pursue immediate pleasures without considering long-term needs. This phenomenon also affects religious communities, which should be moral exemplars for society, but are now often influenced by a consumptive lifestyle (Haryono & Panuntun, 2019). D. Andini et al. also explain that modernity brings significant changes in various aspects of life, including social and cultural. In this era, individuals have emerged who adopt a hedonistic lifestyle as a form of adaptation to an increasingly materialistic environment (D. Andini Supriyadi Dedi, 2019). These findings are in line with Masnida Khairat's research, which reveals a close relationship between a hedonistic lifestyle and consumer behavior, particularly among students. The resulting consumerism often exceeds basic needs, creating an unbalanced lifestyle and making

individuals vulnerable to economic problems (Khairat et al., 2018). As expressed by Khairatun Nisak, a hedonistic lifestyle focuses on the pursuit of pleasure as the main goal of life. This pattern of behavior not only reflects changes in individual priorities but also leads to the degradation of cultural and spiritual values. Therefore, a multidimensional approach involving education, spirituality, and social policies is needed to address the adverse impacts of this phenomenon. This approach is expected to create a more balanced, wise society that steadfastly upholds moral values amidst the currents of changing times (Nisak, 2014).

METHODS

To discuss the theme "The Phenomenon of Modern Hedonism: Abdullah Saeed's Contextual Hermeneutics Analysis of surah At-Takatsur," the approach used is a qualitative method with a focus on contextual hermeneutics analysis. Hermeneutics is an interpretive method that emphasizes understanding a text by considering its historical, social, and cultural context, both at the time of revelation and in contemporary reality (Saeed, 2006). In this study, the contextual hermeneutics introduced by Abdullah Saeed will serve as the main framework for interpreting the messages in surah At-Takatsur to make them relevant to the challenges of the modern era, especially the phenomenon of hedonism that is developing in the digital society (Patton, 2015). This method relies on qualitative data that is descriptive and interpretative. Data is obtained through literature studies that include the analysis of classical and contemporary interpretations, including the works of Abdullah Saeed, as well as secondary sources related to social phenomena, such as consumer lifestyles, the "flexing" culture on social media, and materialistic behavior. Additionally, observing social media content that showcases wealth flaunting trends and interviewing individuals or communities involved in these phenomena can be conducted to gain direct insights into the impact of hedonism in daily life. The analysis of social media content is also an important part of understanding how this consumer culture develops and how religious messages can respond to it.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify the main patterns that connect the verses in surah At-Takatsur with the phenomenon of modern hedonism. This analysis is complemented by a narrative approach to explore the stories constructed by society through social media about luxurious lifestyles, excessive consumption, and obsession with social validation. With this approach, the interpretation of surah At-Takatsur not only focuses on criticizing materialistic behavior but also offers practical solutions based on the principle of balance (*wasathiyyah*) as advocated by Abdullah Saeed. Through contextual hermeneutical analysis, the research results are expected to bridge the teachings of Islam in surah At-Takatsur with contemporary social challenges. This approach provides a deep understanding that the race to accumulate wealth and social status, which characterizes modern hedonism, is merely a temporary pleasure that ends in spiritual emptiness. Therefore, the relevance of the Quran's message can be revived in modern life, not only as a critique of materialistic culture but also as a guide for individuals and society to lead a more meaningful life, both in this world and in the hereafter.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Modern hedonism, which prioritizes the pursuit of pleasure and material satisfaction as the main goals of life, has become a profound phenomenon in contemporary society (Giddens, 1991). The rapidly growing consumer lifestyle often leads to moral degradation and social inequality, creating a gap between traditional values and the reality of modern life. This phenomenon can be seen as a major challenge in leading a balanced life between worldly and spiritual needs (Koentjoro, 2004). To this end, the contextual hermeneutics approach developed by Abdullah Saeed provides a way to explore the relevance of the Qur'anic message, particularly in Surah at-Takatsur, in addressing this phenomenon. Abdullah Saeed is a tafsir expert and contemporary Islamic thinker known for his innovative approach to understanding religious texts. One of Abdullah Saeed's major contributions is the development of contextual hermeneutics, which focuses on the interpretation of religious texts by considering the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which the texts were revealed. This approach is highly relevant in understanding the messages of the Quran amidst the changing times and the continuously evolving social dynamics.

The contextual hermeneutic method applied by Abdullah Saeed aims to avoid a rigid or textual understanding of the verses of the Qur'an. On the contrary, he strives to understand how these messages can be translated in the contemporary context, taking into account social conditions and the challenges of the times (Abdullah, 2007), including the rapidly growing phenomenon of modern hedonism. In relation to Surah at-Takatsur, which speaks about the race to acquire worldly wealth and neglect of the afterlife, Abdullah Saeed will examine how the interpretation of this surah can be applied to contemporary society, which often falls into the

temptation of worldly pleasures (hedonism) without paying attention to spiritual or afterlife matters. Modern hedonism, which prioritizes the pursuit of happiness through physical and material pleasures, is highly relevant to the message contained in Surah at-Takatsur. In Abdullah Saeed's contextual interpretation, this phenomenon will be analyzed in light of humanity's tendency to compete in the pursuit of wealth, social status, and temporary worldly pleasures. Abdullah Saeed will examine how these verses can awaken the awareness of Muslims to return to placing the afterlife as the main goal, even though worldly temptations often entice with various pleasures and achievements.

Abdullah Saeed's contextual hermeneutics is based on the rational and open approach he connects the messages of the Qur'an with the realities of contemporary life, making it highly relevant for addressing modern challenges such as hedonism, materialism, and the tendency to neglect spiritual values. With this more progressive perspective, Abdullah Saeed can provide a more applicable and relevant interpretation to the challenges of the times, helping Muslims face worldly temptations with a deeper and more holistic perspective.

The stages of applying contextual hermeneutics are as follows (Saeed, 2006):

Stage I: Encounter with the World of Text

Stage II: Critical Analysis

Stage III: Significance for the First Responders

Stage IV: Meaning for the Present

The elaboration of the stages mentioned above is as follows:

Stage I: Encounter with the World of Text

The first step in Abdullah Saeed's contextual hermeneutics application is to confront the world of the text (Indonesia, 2014).

الْهَبْكُمْ التَّكَاثُرَ ۚ ۱ حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ۚ ۲ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ۳ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ۴ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ ۵ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ۚ ۶ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوْهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ ۷ ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۚ ۸

1. Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you
2. Until you visit the graveyards.
3. No! You are going to know.
4. Then no! You are going to know.
5. No! If you only knew with knowledge of certainty...
6. You will surely see the Hellfire.
7. Then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty.
8. Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure.

Surah at-Takatsur, which consists of eight verses, conveys a very clear message about the dangers of being overly attached to wealth and worldly pleasures. Allah reminds humanity that the tendency to pursue wealth and luxury can distract them from the main purpose of life, which is to prepare for the afterlife. In the context of the modern world, where many people tend to focus on material achievements, Surah at-Takatsur speaks directly to the developing phenomenon of hedonism. This verse depicts humans who continuously compete in seeking wealth and luxury without realizing that this life is very limited. Various scholars of exegesis provide in-depth explanations regarding the meaning of this surah. Ibn Kathir also reminds Muslims not to get caught up in endless worldly desires and always remember that the afterlife is the ultimate goal (Katsir, 1999). Al-Qurtubi reminds us of the importance of realizing that this worldly life is temporary, and we should not get caught up in arrogance and judgments based on wealth and social status (Al-Qurtubi, 1995). At-Tabari emphasizes that the human tendency to compete for wealth can lead to regret after death, considering that the world is merely a

temporary stop (At-Tabari, 2001). Al-Razi criticized the human tendency to make worldly wealth the main goal of life, and he emphasized that destruction will come as a result of uncontrolled greed (Al-Razi, 1999).

Ibn 'Ashur also delivered a similar warning, emphasizing that worldly wealth will be of no use when death comes and that the more eternal afterlife should be the main focus ('Ashur, 1984). Al-Shanqiti emphasizes that wealth accumulated in the race of this world will not bring true happiness, and only the afterlife holds eternal value (Al-Shanqiti, 1996). Al-Saadi urges the community not to be trapped in worldly pleasures, but to always remember that the afterlife is of greater importance (Al-Saadi, 1993). Fakhr al-Din al-Razi reminds the community to maintain a balance between the world and the hereafter, and not to fall into the greedy attitude that can lead them astray (Al-Razi, 1999). Sayyid Qutb linked his interpretation to the social conditions of modern society, which is trapped in materialism, and reminded that the world is only temporary, so we must prepare ourselves for eternal life (Qutb, 1991). Muhammad Abduh emphasized the importance of avoiding the tendency to accumulate unlawful wealth, which will only lead to misguidance in the hereafter (Abduh, 1967). Quraish Shihab, in his interpretation, invites the community to reflect and not be swayed by the temporary worldly pleasures. He reminds us of the importance of balance between worldly life and the hereafter (Shihab, 2002). Lastly, Buya Hamka emphasized the importance of the awareness that all worldly pleasures we pursue will ultimately be useless when facing the Day of Judgment. Only good deeds will be the true provision. Buya Hamka reminds Muslims to maintain a balance between worldly desires and awareness of the afterlife, which is more eternal and everlasting. Surah at-Takatsur gives a stern warning to Muslims not to be lulled by the temporary pleasures of the world, and to focus more on preparing for the afterlife (Hamka, 1983).

The overall opinions of various tafsir experts regarding Surah at-Takatsur convey a consistent message about the dangers of worldly greed that causes humans to forget about the afterlife. This surah, which consists of eight verses, reminds Muslims not to get caught up in worldly competition that only leads to futility. Exegesis experts such as Ibn Kathir, Al-Qurtubi, At-Tabari, Al-Razi, Ibn 'Ashur, Al-Shanqiti, Al-Saadi, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad Abduh, Quraish Shihab, and Buya Hamka all emphasize the importance of realizing that worldly life is temporary and should not be the main goal. They remind that wealth, status, and worldly pleasures will only bring regret in the hereafter, and what is more important is preparing oneself for eternal life through worship and spiritual awareness. Through their interpretation, it is clear that this surah teaches Muslims to prioritize the afterlife, maintain a balance between the worldly and the hereafter, and avoid greed and arrogance that will only lead to destruction. This entire perspective also invites Muslims to free themselves from the influence of materialism and hedonism that is rampant in modern society. In this context, Surah at-Takatsur serves as a reminder for Muslims not to be swayed by worldly temptations, and to focus more on preparing for a more eternal life in the hereafter.

Stage II: Critical Analysis

In the second stage, a critical analysis of Surah at-Takatsur is conducted through several aspects:

Linguistic: Linguistically, the words in Surah at-Takatsur depict the attitude of humans who are never satisfied with what they have, always wanting more, and competing in amassing wealth. The word "takatsur" itself refers to the feeling of mutual pride in wealth and social status (Al-Qurtubi, 1995).

Literary Context: Literally, Surah at-Takatsur provides a depiction of the impermanence of worldly life. Although the world offers many pleasures and luxuries, this letter reminds readers that all of it is temporary and not comparable to the eternal afterlife (Al-Razi, 1999).

Literary Form: This letter falls into the form of a cautionary literature that directly reminds humanity of the mistakes often made in daily life, namely placing too much importance on the material world without paying attention to spiritual values (Abduh, 1967).

Parallel Texts: In other parallel texts, such as Surah Al-Hadid (57:20), Allah also reminds humans that this worldly life is merely a game, an adornment, and a temporary enjoyment. This further reinforces the moral message in Surah at-Takatsur (Shihab, 2002).

Precedents: Before this letter was revealed, Arab society at that time placed great importance on social status and luxury, so the message in the letter of at-Takatsur can also be seen as a response to the greed and consumerist behavior that had already occurred at that time (Qutb, 1991).

Stage III: Significance for the First Responders

In the third stage, Abdullah Saeed directs us to understand the message of Surah at-Takatsur in the socio-historical context of the time of its revelation, which was during a period when Arab society, particularly in Mecca, was highly focused on worldly wealth, social status, and prestige obtained through wealth and lineage. At that time, many people were competing to amass as much wealth as possible and boasting about their status, thereby forgetting their main purpose in life, which is the afterlife (Al-Qurtubi, 1995). In this context, Surah at-

Takatsur becomes very relevant, as it directly criticizes the tendency of society to be trapped in temporary worldly pleasures. This letter gives a stern warning to humanity not to get caught up in excessive desires for the temporary world, and to prioritize the eternal afterlife.

Surat at-Takatsur contains a very profound ethical and moral message, namely that humans should live their lives with simplicity and not get trapped in the greed for wealth or positions that are temporary. The main message of this surah is to remind humanity that wealth and all worldly pleasures will not last forever, and ultimately only good deeds will be meaningful provisions when facing eternal life in the hereafter. Abdullah Saeed invites us to view this surah as a reflection of the social phenomena present at the time the revelation was sent down, and to apply it in our current lives, where materialism and hedonism often dominate daily life (Shihab, 2002). The reason for the revelation of Surah at-Takatsur is closely related to the social situation of society at that time, which was highly focused on competition in accumulating wealth and carving out social status. The Arab society at that time considered wealth and lineage to be the primary measures of a person's success and honor. This Surah was revealed to remind them not to forget the more essential life, which is the life after death. Allah, through His revelation, reminds humanity that this world is only temporary, and that everything they chase in this world will be in vain if they forget the more eternal and meaningful purpose of life (Qutb, 1991).

Stage IV: Meaning for the Present

The final stage in understanding Surah at-Takatsur is the application of the message contained in this surah in the context of contemporary life, which faces challenges different from those during the time of the revelation. In this modern era, the development of social media and globalization influences the mindset and behavior of society, which often becomes trapped in the increasingly deepening phenomenon of hedonism. Modern hedonism has become a defining characteristic of society in the digital era, which is rife with consumer culture and an orientation towards worldly pleasures. One of the most striking manifestations of this phenomenon is the tendency to flaunt wealth through social media, known as "flexing." Many individuals, including influencers, use platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to showcase luxury items, such as sports cars, branded bags, the latest gadgets, or exclusive vacation experiences. This behavior not only showcases a person's lifestyle but also reflects a deep-seated need for validation and recognition from society. Behind the displayed luxury, there is often hidden social pressure to maintain that image, even at a great cost, both financially and emotionally. This phenomenon does not stop at social media, but also extends to the consumption patterns of branded goods. Many people are willing to spend large amounts of money to buy designer bags, branded clothing, or luxury accessories that are actually not suited to their daily needs. These items often become symbols of social status, where a person's success is measured by the brands they wear or the items they possess. This obsession often involves consumer behavior that exceeds financial capabilities, such as going into debt to buy luxury items in order to maintain prestige.

In addition, modern hedonism is also evident in the habit of excessive entertainment consumption. For example, binge-watching series on streaming platforms, playing online games for hours, or attending expensive parties have become part of the urban lifestyle. These activities are often carried out without considering their negative impact on productivity, health, or financial stability. The culture of hanging out in luxurious places has also become an increasingly popular trend, where many people spend time in expensive cafes or restaurants, not solely to enjoy the food or ambiance, but more to showcase their lifestyle through social media posts. In the context of travel tourism, the phenomenon of hedonism is evident in the tendency to travel to luxury destinations or stay in five-star hotels just to showcase those experiences on social media. Tourist destinations often no longer focus on cultural exploration, education, or spirituality, but rather on the aesthetics of photos and videos that can attract attention in the online world. This adds to the long list of consumerist behaviors rooted in modern culture. In fact, wedding ceremonies that were supposed to be sacred moments have now turned into showcases of luxury. The trend of luxurious weddings with high costs, even to the point of going into debt, increasingly emphasizes that modern society often sacrifices essential values for social prestige.

In the perspective of Abdullah Saeed's contextual hermeneutics, this phenomenon can be linked to the warning in Surah at-Takatsur. This surah criticizes human behavior that is trapped in "takatsur," which is the competition to amass wealth, status, and social recognition, causing them to neglect their true purpose in life. Abdullah Saeed emphasizes that the hermeneutical approach must understand the historical context of the verse's revelation to uncover universal messages relevant to contemporary challenges. In this regard, Surah at-Takatsur speaks to modern humans who are trapped in hedonism and materialism, reminding them that the accumulation of worldly wealth only leads to spiritual emptiness and regret in the hereafter. Saeed also emphasizes the importance of the principle of balance (*wasathiyah*) in living life. In the context of modern hedonism, humans are reminded not to make worldly pleasures the main goal of life, but rather a means to achieve spiritual and

social well-being. Surah at-Takatsur emphasizes that worldly life is temporary, so humans must prepare themselves for the eternal afterlife.

To face the challenges posed by modern hedonistic culture, which is rapidly developing along with technological advancements and consumer culture, solutions are needed that are not only temporary but also sustainable. This solution must encompass various aspects of community life, ranging from education, religious understanding, social regulation, to individual awareness. One of the very important initial steps is character education that instills spiritual values, social responsibility, and simplicity. From an early age, children and teenagers need to be educated about the importance of living simply and not getting caught up in the obsession with excessive consumption. Schools, families, and religious institutions play a very vital role in instilling those values. Character education based on spiritual understanding will help the younger generation to be more wise in determining their life priorities. This not only includes teaching the importance of honesty and hard work, but also teaching that true happiness does not lie in wealth and material possessions, but rather in inner peace, healthy relationships with others, and being beneficial to others.

The phenomenon of social media introducing unrealistic standards of living is closely related to the message contained in Surah at-Takatsur, which reminds us of the dangers of greed and the race to acquire excessive worldly wealth. In this surah, Allah SWT emphasizes that worldly life is temporary and that those who are caught up in the pursuit of social status and wealth will ultimately feel empty, because they forget the more profound purpose of life. The phenomenon of "flexing" on social media, showcasing wealth and a glamorous lifestyle, creates standards that are often far from reality. This is similar to the warning in Surah at-Takatsur about the race for wealth that will only bring regret, because in the end, wealth and riches will not be eternal. This phenomenon also reflects the tendency of humans to forget the deeper essence of life, which is to seek more enduring happiness through spiritual achievements and meaningful relationships with others. Improving digital literacy is an important step that can reduce the negative impact of a social media culture that prioritizes appearance and wealth. Through a better understanding of the psychological impact of unrealistic content, especially for the younger generation, they can learn to be more discerning in consuming information and maintaining their emotional balance. This is in line with the message of Surah Al-Takatsur, which emphasizes that humans should not be trapped in the temporary pleasures of the world, but should focus on more enduring achievements. Awareness campaigns that emphasize values such as a simple lifestyle, sustainability, and social empathy can help change societal paradigms to better appreciate human relationships and more meaningful achievements. By involving influencers and public figures to voice profound positive messages, we can inspire society to live more authentically, not just in pursuit of social recognition or perfect physical appearance. Such campaigns, which encourage society to prioritize inner happiness and emotional well-being, will help reduce social pressure and create a deeper awareness of a greater life purpose, namely spiritual happiness and preparation for eternal life in the hereafter, as taught in surah at-Takatsur.

In the context of Surah at-Takatsur, the message contained within it is highly relevant to the role of religious institutions and communities in shaping collective awareness about the dangers of hedonism and materialism. Surah at-Takatsur reminds humanity that the race to accumulate wealth and increase offspring is merely a temporary worldly pleasure, which will ultimately lead to regret in the hereafter. This verse criticizes the tendency of humans to become trapped in the obsession with social status and wealth, which often obscures the more noble purposes of life. With this approach, religious institutions have a significant responsibility in conveying the message of Surah at-Takatsur to the community through sermons, studies, and religious discussions. Through these media, religious institutions can remind the community not to get caught up in material greed that will only divert attention from the true purpose of life, which is to worship God and contribute to social good. One of the solutions that can be taught is by implementing charitable values such as zakat, sedekah, and wakaf, which not only benefit those in need but also bring inner peace to the giver. In line with the message in Surah at-Takatsur, zakat, charity, and waqf are methods taught by Islam to reduce the tendency to accumulate wealth, and to remind us that true happiness does not lie in how much wealth one possesses, but in how that wealth is utilized for the benefit of others. By increasing charity and sharing blessings, Muslims can free themselves from the shackles of materialism and return to placing more noble life goals, namely, self-improvement, worshiping God, and building a society that is more concerned with social welfare. Through a deep understanding of Surah at-Takatsur, Muslims are reminded to maintain a balance between worldly needs and social responsibilities. This verse emphasizes that worldly life is temporary, and that we should not get caught up in the race to acquire excessive wealth. Therefore, religious institutions must continue to encourage the faithful to direct their lives towards achieving higher spiritual goals and providing benefits to society, in accordance with the balanced and welfare-oriented teachings of Islam.

The role of the government in creating policies that support a simple and value-based lifestyle is very much in line with the message in Surah at-Takatsur, which reminds us of the dangers of greed and the race to

acquire worldly wealth. In that surah, Allah SWT emphasizes that the excessive pursuit of wealth can make humans forget the higher and eternal purpose of life. This letter reminds us that this world is temporary and that the uncontrolled desire to accumulate wealth will only bring regret in the end. Lastly, an individual's responsibility in managing their life wisely is closely related to the message contained in Surah at-Takatsur. This surah reminds us that a worldly life filled with temporary pleasures, such as wealth and riches, should not be the main goal of life. The verses in this letter criticize those who are caught up in the race to accumulate wealth and social status, which ultimately makes them forget the more profound purpose of life. As explained in the Surah at-Takatsur, wealth and possessions only lead to futility if we forget our spiritual responsibilities and our relationship with God. In this context, avoiding consumer debt and managing finances wisely become concrete steps that individuals can take to counter the tide of hedonism and materialism. As a reminder from Surah at-Takatsur, true happiness does not come from the accumulation of possessions or social status, but rather from meaningful relationships with God and fellow human beings. Individuals who possess this awareness will be better able to filter their true needs in life, and focus more on self-development, improving the quality of social relationships, and making positive contributions to society. By focusing on deeper and more eternal matters such as spiritual, moral, and social relationships, individuals can create a deeper sense of satisfaction and happiness. This is also in line with the teachings in Surah at-Takatsur, which emphasize the importance of maintaining a balance between worldly needs and responsibilities towards a more eternal life. Thus, this awareness will help individuals avoid falling into the trap of materialism and guide them towards a more meaningful life, both in this world and in the hereafter.

By understanding this hedonism phenomenon through the lens of Abdullah Saeed's contextual hermeneutics, we can draw wisdom from Surah at-Takatsur, which provides an eternal warning about the race for wealth that distracts humans from their true purpose in life. Abdullah Saeed invites us to understand the messages of the Qur'an with a contextual approach that aligns with the challenges of the times. Surah at-Takatsur reminds us that the accumulation of worldly wealth will not bring true happiness. On the contrary, true happiness comes when we find balance in life, reflect on higher life purposes, and make virtue and social contribution the foundation of our lives. The messages in this verse are very relevant for us living in a world that is often trapped in hedonism, and can serve as a guide to living a more meaningful life, in harmony with divine purpose and collective well-being.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that Surah at-Takatsur conveys a message that is relevant both in the socio-historical context of its revelation and in modern life. Abdullah Saeed, through a contextual hermeneutics approach, highlights that this surah criticizes pre-Islamic Arab society, which was caught up in the race to accumulate wealth and social status, thereby forgetting the ultimate purpose of life, which is the afterlife. The ethical and moral message of this letter emphasizes the importance of living simply and not being ensnared by greed for worldly things that are temporary. In the modern context, the phenomenon of hedonism, which is increasingly spreading through social media, consumer culture, and obsession with social validation, reflects the relevance of the message of Surah at-Takatsur. Through a contextual approach, this letter reminds humans not to get trapped in the phenomenon of "takatsur," such as flaunting wealth on social media, excessive consumption patterns, and a glamorous lifestyle that forgets spiritual balance. Abdullah Saeed emphasizes the importance of applying the values of balance (*wasathiyyah*) and avoiding materialism that distracts humans from their true purpose in life. The message of this letter emphasizes that the accumulation of worldly wealth only brings spiritual emptiness and does not provide lasting happiness.

This research also provides recommendations for the next steps. First, character education that instills values of simplicity and social responsibility needs to be strengthened from an early age through the roles of family, schools, and religious institutions. Second, digital literacy must be improved to reduce the negative impact of social media culture that prioritizes appearance and social status. Third, religious institutions need to actively convey the messages of Surah at-Takatsur through sermons, studies, and religious discussions, emphasizing the importance of zakat, charity, and waqf as spiritual and social solutions to combat materialism. Fourth, the government needs to regulate advertisements and promotions that encourage a consumerist lifestyle, and support a sustainable economy that is more mindful of social and environmental sustainability. Lastly, individuals are reminded to manage their lives wisely, avoid consumer debt, and focus on achieving deeper spiritual fulfillment. Surat at-Takatsur serves as a universal guide to understanding that true happiness lies in meaningful relationships with God and fellow humans, not in the accumulation of wealth and social status. With this approach, modern humans can achieve a more meaningful, balanced life that aligns with divine purpose.

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