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## The Values of Tawakkal and Husnuzan toward Allah in the Lyrics of the Song *Insyah Allah* by Maher Zain

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### ABSTRACT

*This article examines the values of tawakkal and husnuzan toward Allah contained in the lyrics of the song *Insyah Allah* by Maher Zain. This study is motivated by the absence of research that specifically analyzes the song using the framework of Akhlak Tasawuf, particularly the theory of tawakkal according to Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and the theory of husnuzan according to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah in *Madarij al-Salikin*. The study employs a qualitative approach with content analysis and library research as its method. The data consist of linguistic units in the lyrics, which are analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, with data validity ensured through theoretical triangulation. The analysis shows that the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* contain the value of tawakkal, which encompasses Al-Ghazali's three levels, ranging from expressions of surrender to Allah, calls not to despair, to total submission in seeking guidance. The value of husnuzan appears dominantly through the phrase "*Insyah Allah there's a way*," repeated eight times, the belief in Allah's presence and nearness, and the pattern of active effort that demonstrates husnuzan in this song belongs to the mahmud (praiseworthy) category according to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah's classification, not ghurur. This study is expected to fill the gap in previous research while also showing that the values of Akhlak Tasawuf can be experienced through contemporary musical works.*



## INTRODUCTION

Music is one of the effective media of communication for conveying moral and spiritual messages to the wider community. In the modern era, music functions not only as entertainment but has also developed into a means of da'wah capable of reaching various audiences without geographical boundaries. Nasir (2016) in *Esoterik: Jurnal Akhlak dan Tasawuf* states that Sufi practitioners have long used music and poetry as a medium of taqarrub (drawing near) to Allah SWT, provided that it does not contain elements contrary to Islamic law. Naldi et al. (2023) in *Atthiflah* add that tawakkal does not negate effort; rather, it directs humans to work earnestly, make rational decisions, and surrender the final outcome to Allah SWT. Wulandari et al. (2019) in *Tabligh: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam* emphasize that when da'wah using music becomes increasingly popular, its benefits are not limited to enjoining good and forbidding evil, but also include an emotional and spiritual training that sharpens sensitivity and conscience, making music a medium of education that is easily accepted by society.

One of the most influential Islamic musicians in the contemporary era is Maher Zain, a Swedish singer and songwriter of Lebanese descent. The song *Insyah Allah* from the album *Thank You Allah* (2009) is one of his most phenomenal and widely known works among Muslims worldwide. The song depicts the condition of a person who is in darkness and confusion in life, yet continues to be guided to rise by relying on Allah. Salamah (2012) from UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya found that the song *Insyah Allah* contains da'wah messages in the form of aqidah and akhlak values conveyed through a semiotic approach, making it easily accepted by listeners from various backgrounds.

Two noble values highly relevant to the message of this song are tawakkal and husnuzan toward Allah. Tawakkal, according to Al-Ghazali (2016) in *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, is the serenity of the heart in relying on Allah as al-Wakil after a person has made maximum effort. Al-Ghazali divides tawakkal into three levels: first, entrusting affairs to Allah as one would entrust matters to a trusted representative; second, inner peace like a baby in its mother's arms, without worrying about anything; and third, total submission without the slightest doubt, which is the highest level. al-Hanbali (2012) complements this by defining tawakkal as fully entrusting the heart to Allah in seeking benefit and repelling harm, while Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2003) in *Al-Fawa'id* emphasizes that the greatest tawakkal is tawakkal in obtaining guidance and remaining steadfast upon monotheism, not merely worldly matters. This foundation of tawakkal is affirmed in Allah's words in QS. At-Talaq: 3:

[وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ فَمَنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا]

"...And whoever relies upon Allah, then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a measure."

As for husnuzan toward Allah, according to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2003) in *Madarij al-Salikin*, it is the heart's conviction that Allah is Most Merciful and will never neglect His striving servant. Ibn Qayyim distinguishes husnuzan into two types: husnuzan that is praiseworthy (mahmud), namely having a good opinion of Allah based on deeds and obedience; and husnuzan that is blameworthy (madzmum) or ghurur, namely having a good opinion without any effort at all. Shihab (2002) in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* strengthens this by interpreting husnuzan as the belief that Allah is always present and responds to the condition of His servants, while also encouraging Muslims to keep striving because they are convinced that Allah does not waste their efforts. This foundation of husnuzan is stated in Allah's words in QS. Yusuf: 87:

[وَلَا تَيْأَسُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ]

"...Do not despair of relief from Allah. Indeed, none despairs of relief from Allah except the disbelieving people."

These two values, tawakkal and husnuzan, strengthen one another and are part of the maqamat (spiritual stations) in Sufi teachings that apply to all Muslims (Hasanah, 2026). Although the song *Insyah Allah*



Allah has been studied before, previous studies have not addressed the aspect examined in this article. Salamah (2012) analyzed the song semiotically to identify general da'wah messages, without making tawakkal and husnuzan the specific objects of study. Syah (2021) in *Textura* examined it from the perspective of denotative and connotative meaning through a semantic approach, but did not touch the framework of Akhlak Tasawuf. Hasanah (2026) discussed tawakkal as a maqamat conceptually and theoretically without relating it to musical analysis, and Nasir (2016) discussed the relationship between music and Sufism in general without making a particular song the object of study. Thus, no study has specifically analyzed the values of tawakkal and husnuzan in the lyrics of the song *Insyah Allah* using the theories of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah as the main foundation. This gap provides the justification and urgency for this study.

Based on the explanation above, this article formulates two research questions: (1) How is the value of tawakkal reflected in the lyrics of the song *Insyah Allah* by Maher Zain based on Al-Ghazali's theory? (2) How is the value of husnuzan toward Allah reflected in the lyrics of the song *Insyah Allah* by Maher Zain based on Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah's theory? These two questions are answered through qualitative content analysis of the song lyrics using Al-Ghazali (2016) theory of tawakkal in *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah theory of husnuzan (2003) in *Madarij al-Salikin* as the main analytical framework. This study is important not only to fill the existing academic gap, but also to show that the noble values of Akhlak Tasawuf do not live only in classical texts, but can also be found and appreciated through contemporary musical works that are close to the lives of Muslims today.

## METHODS OF RESEARCH

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research design. This approach was chosen because the main object of study is the text of the song lyrics, which constitutes verbal data in written form and therefore requires in-depth interpretive and contextual analysis rather than numerical measurement. The method used is qualitative content analysis, namely the process of identifying, classifying, and interpreting the meanings contained in the text based on a predetermined theoretical framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This method was selected for its ability to reveal both implicit and explicit meanings in a text systematically and in a manner that is academically accountable.

### Data and Data Sources

The data in this study consist of linguistic units in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and lines from the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* by Maher Zain that semantically contain the values of tawakkal or husnuzan. The data were selected purposively based on their relevance to the indicators formulated from the two theoretical frameworks used. The primary data source is the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* from the album *Thank You Allah* (Awakening Records, 2009), written by Maher Zain together with Hamza Robertson and Bara Kherigi. The lyrics were taken from the official source and verified against the song's original audio recording to ensure data accuracy. Secondary data sources include: (1) *Ihya' Ulumuddin* by Al-Ghazali (2016) as the theoretical basis for tawakkal; (2) *Madarij al-Salikin* and *Al-Fawa'id* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2003) as the theoretical basis for husnuzan; (3) *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab (2002) as a reference for interpreting the relevant Qur'anic verses; and (4) relevant scholarly journals, namely Nasir (2016), Salamah (2012), Syah (2021), and Hasanah (2026), which were used to support the analysis and map previous studies.

### Data Collection

Data were collected through documentation techniques carried out in stages. The first stage was inventorying, namely collecting the complete and intact text of the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* from the



designated primary source. The second stage was close reading, namely reading all lyric lines carefully and repeatedly to understand the lexical and contextual meaning of each line. The third stage was coding, namely marking every word, phrase, or line that linguistically contains indicators of tawakkal or husnuzan. The tawakkal indicators used refer to Al-Ghazali's three levels (2016), namely: (a) expressions of surrender and trust in Allah, (b) calls not to despair as a reflection of holding fast to Allah amid anxiety, and (c) requests for guidance and protection as a form of total submission. The husnuzan indicators refer to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah's categorization (2003), namely: (a) the belief that Allah is always present and answers prayers, (b) optimism that every difficulty contains wisdom and that there is always a way out, and (c) the belief that Allah is never far from His servant. The coded data were then recorded and grouped into a data classification table to facilitate the analysis process.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1994), which consists of three stages that occur simultaneously and are interconnected. First, data reduction, namely sorting and simplifying all coded data by focusing only on data that are truly relevant to the indicators of tawakkal and husnuzan. At this stage, lyric lines that do not contain the values of these two concepts are excluded from the analysis, while relevant data are classified into two major groups: tawakkal and husnuzan, and then further detailed according to each sub-indicator. Second, data display, namely presenting the classification results in the form of analytical descriptions that systematically connect each lyric datum with the relevant theoretical concept. At this stage, every classified lyric line is analyzed in depth by directly referring to Al-Ghazali's concept of tawakkal (2016) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah's concept of husnuzan (2003), supported by Shihab (2002) and other secondary sources to strengthen the interpretation. Third, conclusion drawing, namely formulating the final answer to the two research questions based on the overall analysis that has been conducted. Data validity was ensured through theoretical triangulation, namely by using more than one theoretical perspective—Al-Ghazali, Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah, and Shihab in analyzing the same data, so that the resulting interpretation is more comprehensive, not one-sided, and academically defensible.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### The Value of Tawakkal in the Lyrics of Insyah Allah

Based on the content analysis of the entire lyrics of Insyah Allah using the tawakkal indicators formulated from Al-Ghazali's theory (2016) in Ihya' Ulumuddin, three groups of lyric data were found to reflect the value of tawakkal. The grouping was carried out based on the compatibility of each lyric line's meaning with the three established indicators of tawakkal, namely expressions of surrender to Allah, calls not to despair, and the depiction of human weakness as the starting point of tawakkal. The results of this grouping are presented in the following table.

No.	Lyric line	Tawakkal indicator	Frequency
1	"Put your trust in Him, raise your hands and pray"	Expression of surrender to Allah	1x



2	“O Ya Allah, guide my steps, don’t let me go astray, you’re the only one that showed me the way”	Expression of surrender to Allah (highest level: seeking guidance)	1x
3	“Don’t despair and never lose hope, ’cause Allah is always by your side”	Call not to despair	3x
4	“Every time you feel like you cannot go on, you feel so lost, so alone, all you see is night and darkness all around, you feel so helpless”	Depiction of human weakness as the starting point of <i>tawakkal</i>	2x

### The Value of Husnuzan in the Lyrics of Insya Allah

Based on the content analysis using the husnuzan indicators formulated from Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah theory (2003) in *Madarij al-Salikin*, three groups of lyric data were found to reflect the value of husnuzan. The grouping was carried out based on the compatibility of each lyric line’s meaning with the three established indicators of husnuzan, namely optimism that there is always a way out, the belief that Allah is always present, and husnuzan accompanied by effort (*mahmud*). The results of this grouping are presented in the following table.

No.	Lyric line	Husnuzan indicator	Frequency
1	“Insya Allah there’s a way”	Optimism that there is always a way out of every difficulty	8x
2	“’Cause Allah is always by your side”	Belief that Allah is always present and never abandons His servant	3x
3	“Turn to Allah, He’s never far away”	Belief that Allah is always near and easy to turn to	1x
4	“Raise your hands and pray / Turn to Allah / Put your trust in Him”	<i>Husnuzan</i> accompanied by active effort ( <i>mahmud</i> ), not <i>ghurur</i>	Each 1x

### Discussion

#### Tawakkal in the Lyrics

The four lyric data points found in the results section show that the value of tawakkal in *Insya Allah* does not appear sporadically, but forms a coherent and complete spiritual narrative. Structurally, the song builds the narrative of tawakkal through three phases: the depiction of human weakness, the call not to despair, and the climax of total surrender to Allah.

The first phase begins with the fourth lyric datum, namely “Every time you feel like you cannot



go on, you feel so lost, so alone, all you see is night and darkness all around, you feel so helpless.” This line vividly portrays the lowest point of human experience: loss of direction, loneliness, and helplessness. In a Sufi perspective, this condition is called *faqr* the awareness of one’s absolute poverty before Allah which becomes the prerequisite for genuine *tawakkal*. Al-Ghazali (2016) in *Ihya’ Ulumuddin* asserts that *tawakkal* can only grow from full awareness that human beings possess no power or ability except through Allah’s help. This line appears twice in the song, showing that human weakness is not presented as an exception, but as a recurring and universal reality. Nurmiati et al. (2021) in *Palita: Journal of Social Religion Research* affirm that the value of *tawakkal* in the Qur’an is consistently linked to the necessity of effort first, so that true *tawakkal* is not a passive attitude but an active and conscious surrender to Allah.

The second phase is the call not to despair, which directly responds to that state of weakness: “Don’t despair and never lose hope, ’cause Allah is always by your side.” This line appears three times and reflects the first level of *tawakkal* according to Al-Ghazali (2016), namely remaining attached to Allah even while one is still in anxiety and confusion. Narratively, its placement immediately after the depiction of human weakness confirms that *tawakkal* is a direct spiritual response to such a condition. (Ibu Rajab al-Hanbali, 2012) in *Jami’ al-‘Uloom wal-Hikam* states that *tawakkal* is fully entrusting the heart to Allah when facing harm, and the phrase “never lose hope,” accompanied by the reason “’cause Allah is always by your side,” is the clearest expression of that heart’s reliance: hope must not die precisely because Allah never abandons His servant.

The third and highest phase is reflected in two lines from the first and second data items. The line “Put your trust in Him, raise your hands and pray” depicts *tawakkal* accompanied by active effort in the form of prayer, in line with Al-Ghazali’s view (2016) that true *tawakkal* does not mean abandoning effort, but surrendering the outcome after effort has been made maximally. Allah SWT affirms this in QS. Ali Imran: 159:

[فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ] {dir="rtl"}

“...Then when you have decided, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.”

Meanwhile, the line “O Ya Allah, guide my steps, don’t let me go astray, you’re the only one that showed me the way” is the peak of the song’s *tawakkal* narrative, namely total submission in seeking guidance. Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah (2003) in *Al-Fawa’id* emphatically states that the greatest and most noble form of *tawakkal* is *tawakkal* to obtain guidance and remain firm upon monotheism, not merely in worldly matters such as sustenance. The supplication “guide my steps, don’t let me go astray” precisely reflects this highest essence of *tawakkal*, because the subject in this line does not ask for wealth or worldly safety, but asks Allah to protect his steps so that he does not deviate from the right path.

### Husnuzan in the Lyrics

The four lyric data points found in the results section show that the value of *husnuzan* in *Insyah Allah* appears very dominantly, consistently, and forms a spiritual pattern that is *mahmud* (praiseworthy) according to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah’s classification (2003) in *Madarij al-Salikin*. Overall, *husnuzan* in this song appears in three forms: optimism about the vastness of Allah’s mercy, certainty of Allah’s presence and closeness, and a pattern of *husnuzan* that is always accompanied by active effort.

The first and most dominant form is the phrase “*Insyah Allah* there’s a way,” which appears eight times throughout the song. This frequency is not merely rhetorical repetition, but a strong emphasis that this spiritual message of optimism is the core of the entire song. Semantically, the phrase contains two layers of meaning: “*Insyah Allah*,” meaning “if Allah wills,” is an explicit acknowledgment that everything is under Allah’s power and will alone, while “there’s a way” is a declaration of certainty that Allah will always provide a way out of every difficulty. The combination of these two meanings is the



most accurate expression of Ibn Qayyim's second type of husnuzan (2003), namely full conviction that every hardship contains wisdom and will be replaced by goodness from Allah. Its theological foundation is found in the Hadith Qudsi narrated by Bukhari and Muslim:

أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي، فَلْيُظَنَّ بِي مَا شَاءَ

"I am as My servant thinks of Me, so let him think of Me as he wishes."

This hadith reinforces why husnuzan is repeatedly proclaimed in the song: because the quality of a servant's opinion of Allah directly affects the quality of Allah's response to that servant.

The second form is the belief in Allah's presence and closeness, reflected in two complementary lines. The line "Cause Allah is always by your side," which appears three times, explicitly states that Allah is always present beside His servant in any condition, including the darkest ones. This reflects the first husnuzan according to Ibn Qayyim (2003), namely the belief that Allah will certainly answer prayers and never abandon His servant. The line "Turn to Allah, He's never far away" complements it with a slightly different dimension: if the previous line states that Allah is present at the servant's side, this line affirms that Allah is also easily reachable—there is no distance too great to turn to Him. Shihab (2002) in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* interprets husnuzan toward Allah as the belief that Allah always responds to the condition of His servant, and these two lines together confirm that belief very concretely: Allah is always there, and Allah is always accessible.

The third and most important form theologically is that husnuzan in this song consistently belongs to the mahmud category, not ghurur—false optimism without action. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2003) in *Madarij al-Salikin* clearly distinguishes the two: praiseworthy husnuzan is grounded in faith and actual obedience, while having a good opinion of Allah without any effort is ghurur, which is actually destructive. The song *Insyah Allah* consistently proves itself to belong to the first category, because every expression of optimism and trust in Allah is always immediately accompanied by an invitation to active effort: "raise your hands and pray" (pray), "turn to Allah" (turn and move toward Allah), and "put your trust in Him" (surrender actively and consciously). This highly consistent pattern confirms that the song's message does not teach spiritual passivity, but rather optimism energized by husnuzan that encourages real action, exactly in line with Shihab's view (2002) that true husnuzan actually motivates a Muslim to strive even more because he believes Allah will not waste his efforts. Syauqi (2023) in *Ameena Journal* states that Sufism, including the values of husnuzan and tawakkal within it, functions as spiritual therapy that helps modern humans rediscover the meaning of life amid pressure and existential crisis, making Islamic songs such as *Insyah Allah* a highly relevant medium for internalizing these values.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the content analysis of the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* by Maher Zain using the framework of Akhlak Tasawuf theory, two main conclusions can be drawn in accordance with the research questions formulated.

First, the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* contain the value of tawakkal, reflected in three groups of data: expressions of surrender to Allah ("put your trust in Him"), calls not to despair ("don't despair and never lose hope"), and the depiction of human weakness as the starting point of tawakkal. This value of tawakkal encompasses the three levels formulated by Al-Ghazali (2016) in *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, from the first level of remaining attached to Allah amid anxiety to the highest level of total submission in seeking guidance ("guide my steps don't let me go astray").

Second, the lyrics of *Insyah Allah* contain a highly dominant value of husnuzan, reflected in the phrase "*Insyah Allah* there's a way," repeated eight times as a manifestation of the belief that every difficulty contains wisdom, the lines "Allah is always by your side" and "He's never far away" as expressions of belief in Allah's presence, and the song's pattern of always accompanying husnuzan with



calls to active effort, which proves that the husnuzan in this song belongs to the mahmud category, not ghurur, according to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah's classification (2003), in *Madarij al-Salikin*.

This study fills a gap in previous research, which tended to examine the song *Insyah Allah* from semiotic or linguistic aspects without deeply engaging the framework of Akhlak Tasawuf. Future research is recommended to extend the analysis to other works by Maher Zain or other contemporary Islamic musicians using a similar approach.

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