




Research Article

The Terminology of Thuma'ninah in the Qur'an: Al Qurtubi's Interpretation and Mental Health Relevance

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Abstract. The rising cases of stress, anxiety, and mental health disorders highlight the growing need for inner tranquillity. The Qur'an introduces the concept of al-thuma'ninah, yet its meanings across different verses have not been comprehensively examined through the lens of classical exegesis. Previous studies largely focus on semantic or contemporary approaches, leaving a gap in

understanding how classical scholars conceptualised thuma'ninah. This study addresses this gap by analysing the meaning of al-thuma'ninah according to al-Qurtubi's Tafsir al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, using qualitative library research and thematic analysis of Qur'anic verses derived from the root ط-م-أ-ن. The research aims to identify the categories of thuma'ninah and explore their relevance to mental health. The findings show that al-thuma'ninah is a multidimensional concept encompassing epistemological reassurance, psychospiritual calm, steadfast faith under pressure, social stability, and illusory worldly tranquillity. These results affirm its relevance as a spiritual foundation for modern mental well-being.

Keywords: Thuma'ninah, Al-Qurtubi, Inner Tranquillity, Classical Exegesis, Mental Health

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an as the main source of Islamic teachings gives serious attention to the inner dimension of human beings, including matters of spiritual tranquillity (Ariyanto, 2020). A Qur'anic term that expresses this condition is al-thuma'ninah. Yet the meaning of this term in the Qur'an is not singular or homogeneous. It appears in varied contexts and semantic relations, such as believers' heart-calming, firmness of faith, and the soul's stability when facing life's trials. These variations show that al-thuma'ninah is a rich Qur'anic concept needing careful study.

The concept of inner tranquillity (*al-thuma'ninah*) holds a significant position. Inner calm functions as a pillar of mental health but also becomes a source of internal strength that enables individuals to endure and remain adaptive amid life's pressures (Burhanudin, 2025). A tranquil soul tends to produce psychological stability, emotional regulation, and social relationships. Conversely, the absence of inner calm may heighten vulnerability to stress and mental disorders. Therefore, al-thuma'ninah may be regarded as an important element in maintaining mental health.

The urgency of this research becomes increasingly relevant when connected with the factual condition of modern society. According to the 2023 WHO report, more than 301 million people worldwide suffer from anxiety and depression, including a significant rise among younger demographics (World Health Organization, 2023). In Indonesia, the 2023 National Health Survey (Riskesmas) by the Ministry of Health recorded that one in ten individuals experiences mental health problems, while levels of stress and anxiety continue to increase due to economic pressure, workplace competition, and excessive exposure to digital information. This phenomenon demonstrates that restlessness and psychological distress are no longer merely individual issues but social problems that demand interdisciplinary approaches, including religious studies capable of providing foundations of meaning, life orientation, and spiritual calm. Within this context, al-thuma'ninah becomes highly relevant as a Qur'anic concept that may strengthen mental health and emotional stability.

Previous studies have addressed similar themes, although intersecting with or partially related to the present research. Rifaannudin (2023) examined the terms *as-sakinah* and *at-thuma'ninah* using a Qur'anic semantic approach and identified differences in their meanings in shaping tranquillity. However, the study emphasised

linguistic analysis and did not explore the interpretative frameworks of mufassirun, particularly classical exegetes with methodological structures. The study by Maghfiroh et al. (2025), which employed Toshihiko Izutsu's semantic approach, offered a contribution to mapping the conceptual meaning of calm within the Qur'anic worldview. Nevertheless, the modern semantic approach applied tends to be detached from the classical tafsir tradition, so the meaning of thuma'ninah is not directly connected to the verse context, exegetical reports, or the theological and ethical dimensions of classical scholars. Exegetical studies addressing derivations of related roots, such as Asiyah Istitha'ah's (2020) research on the term *muthmainnah* in *Tafsir al-Azhar*, demonstrate an interest in the theme of tranquillity from the perspective of interpretations. However, its focus is limited to a contemporary *tafsir* and a single lexical derivation, so it does not represent the range of meanings of *al-thuma'ninah* across Qur'anic verses, particularly in works like *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*.

Based on this review, the novelty of the present study lies in two key aspects. First, it examines the meaning of *thuma'ninah* in the Qur'an more comprehensively by referring to al-Qurtubi's *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, a work in the exegetical tradition. Second, it not only analyses the verses but also further explores the relevance of this concept to mental health. The study seeks to open a broader dialogue between *tafsir* and psychological needs.

This study aims to analyse the meaning of the term *thuma'ninah* in the Qur'an according to *Tafsir al-Qurtubi* and to examine its relevance to the concept of mental health. Through this research, it is expected to contribute to the development of Qur'anic exegesis and to enrich understanding of the concept of tranquillity in the Qur'anic perspective as a spiritual foundation relevant to efforts to maintain mental health in the modern era.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research falls within the category of library research with a qualitative approach. The data were analysed using content analysis techniques through a thematic method. The stages of the research include: (1) identifying and collecting Qur'anic verses containing the term *thuma'ninah*; (2) gathering al-Qurtubi's interpretations of these verses; (3) analysing the meaning of *thuma'ninah* based on al-Qurtubi's exegetical explanations; and (4) formulating conclusions from the results of the analysis. The main data source of this study is Imam al-Qurtubi's *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*. The collection of verses containing *thuma'ninah* was carried out through a careful reading of the Qur'an. From this process, it was found that the term *thuma'ninah*, in its various derivations, appears thirteen times across eleven surahs. This primary source is supplemented by supporting literature discussing the meaning of *thuma'ninah*, studies on *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*, and the biography of Imam al-Qurtubi.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Imam al-Qurtubi

According to Dr Muhammad Husain al-Dhahabi in his monumental work *al-Tafsir wa al-Mufasssirun*, Imam al-Qurtubi's full name is Abu 'Abdillah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abi Bakr ibn Farh al-Ansari al-Khazraji al-Andalusi al-Qurtubi (Dhahabi, n.d.). He was one of the great scholars originating from the European region (al-Andalus) who made highly significant contributions to Islamic scholarship, particularly in Qur'anic exegesis.

Imam al-Qurtubi was known as a scholar of remarkable intellectual breadth, especially in jurisprudence and Qur'anic interpretation. Beyond his scholarship, he was renowned for his asceticism and his orientation towards the Hereafter, distancing himself from worldly luxuries. Most of his time was devoted to worship and scholarly activity, particularly writing, through which he produced numerous influential works still widely referenced today.

Among the major works left by Imam al-Qurtubi are *al-Asna fi Sharh Asma' Allah al-Husna wa Sifatih*, *al-Tidhkar fi Af'dal al-Adhkar*, *al-Tadhkirah fi Ahwal al-Mawta wa Umur al-Akhirah*, *Qam' al-Hirs bi al-Zuhd wa al-Qana'ah wa Radd Dhalika al-Su'al bi al-Kutub wa al-Shafa'ah*, as well as his monumental work *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*. These works reflect his diligence in seeking knowledge from teachers specialising in various disciplines.

The teachers of Imam al-Qurtubi included Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Wahhab ibn Rawaj al-Iskandarani (d. 648 AH), a Maliki scholar of hadith; Ibn al-Jumayzi (d. 649 AH), a scholar of hadith, jurisprudence, and Qur'anic readings with a Shafi'i background; Abu 'Abbas Ahmad ibn 'Umar ibn Ibrahim al-Maliki al-Qurtubi, author of *al-Mufhim fi Sharh Sahih Muslim*; Abu 'Ali al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Bakri al-Hafiz; and Abu al-Hasan 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Hafs al-Yahshibi (Sholeh, 2018).

After offering immense contributions to Islamic scholarship and dedicating his life to religious service, Imam al-Qurtubi passed away on the night of Monday, 9 Shawwal 671 AH, in Cairo, Egypt (Iyazi, n.d.). His scholarly legacy and exemplary character have left a lasting imprint, making him one of the figures honoured across generations of the Muslim community.

Tafsir Al-Qurtubi

The full title of *Tafsir al-Qurtubi* is *al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an wa al-Mubayyin lima Taqdammanahu min al-Sunnah wa Ay al-Furqan*. This designation originates directly from Imam al-Qurtubi himself, as he affirms in the introduction to his exegesis (Yanti & Burhanuddin, 2023). From the title, it is understood that the work consists of a compilation of explanations of the legal rulings contained in the Qur'an, accompanied by clarifications of its contents based on the Sunnah of the Prophet and other Qur'anic verses.

This *tafsir* is one of the most influential and distinguished works of its time, particularly due to its comprehensiveness in discussing jurisprudential matters. The book incorporates views from various legal schools, while also giving serious attention to the sciences of *qira'at*, *i'rab*, linguistic studies such as grammar and *balaghah*, as

well as discussions on abrogating and abrogated rulings (*nasikh* and *mansukh*) (Rifaldi & Hadi, 2021). These features demonstrate the breadth and depth of the methodological approach employed by al-Qurtubi in interpreting the Qur'an.

Before presenting his interpretation of the Qur'anic verses, al-Qurtubi first provides a *muqaddimah* as an introduction. In this section, he discusses matters related to engaging with the Qur'an and several important topics in *'ulum al-Qur'an*. These discussions include: (1) the virtues of the Qur'an and the exhortation to study, recite, listen to, and apply it; (2) the proper manner of reading and teaching the Qur'an, along with warnings against ostentation; (3) the etiquette of carrying and honouring the Qur'an; and (4) examinations of the seven dialects, the history of codification, the arrangement of surahs and verses, and other themes relating to Qur'anic sciences.

After presenting the *muqaddimah*, al-Qurtubi interprets the Qur'an following the sequential order of the surahs and verses in the *mushaf*. He typically begins by citing one or more relevant verses, then discusses the issues arising from them systematically. In general, his exegetical steps include: explaining the virtues and characteristics of the surah (its name, time of revelation, and legal content), presenting the *asbab al-nuzul* where available, linking the verse to other verses and hadith as supporting evidence, examining linguistic aspects by referring to Arabic poetry, citing the opinions of scholars along with their sources, and addressing differing viewpoints before performing *tarjih* by selecting the strongest opinion.

The Placement of the Term al-Thuma'ninah in the Qur'an

The term *الطمأنينة* (*al-thuma'ninah*) derives from the root letters ط-م-أ-ن, which in *Lisan al-'Arab* is defined as *السكون بعد الاضطراب*, meaning calmness after disturbance or agitation. This definition indicates that *thuma'ninah* is not merely a state of physical stillness or quietness, but a tranquillity that emerges after the soul experiences turmoil, such as when a previously anxious person attains inner peace. In other words, this tranquillity is reactive and transformative, arising from a shift from instability towards inner stability.

This fundamental meaning subsequently generates various derived forms that expand its usage within the Qur'an. The term *al-thuma'ninah* appears 13 times in the Qur'an, distributed across 11 surahs in several morphological forms (Muhammad Fuad 'Abd Al Baqi, n.d.). The perfect verb *اطمأنَّ* signifies "became tranquil", whereas the imperfect forms *يطمئن* or *تطمئن* denote "is becoming" or "will feel tranquil". The active participles *مطمئن* / *مطمئنة* refer to a soul or heart that is tranquil, while the verbal noun *الطمأنينة* affirms the meaning of deep and profound tranquillity.

Tabel 1 The Term Thuma'ninah and Its Derivatives

No	Qur'anic verse	Surah	Lafadz
1.	قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي "He said, 'Indeed, but only so that my heart may be reassured.'"	QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 260	لِيَطْمَئِنَّ

2.	وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِ "And Allah made it only as glad tidings for you, and so that your hearts might be reassured thereby."	QS. Ali-Imran [3]: 126	وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ
3.	وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا أَطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ "And when you lie down, then once you feel secure, perform the prayer."	QS. An-Nisa [4]: 103	أَطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ
4.	قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا "They said, 'Perhaps we may eat from it and our hearts may be reassured.'"	QS. Al-Maidah [5]: 113	وَتَطْمَئِنَّ
5.	وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ "And Allah made it nothing but a source of glad tidings, and so that your hearts may be reassured thereby."	QS. Al-Anfaal [8]: 10	وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ
6.	وَأَطْمَأْنَوْا بِمَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غٰفِلُونَ "And so that their hearts may feel reassured; yet those who turn away from Our signs are negligent."	QS. Yunus [10]: 7	وَأَطْمَأْنَوْا
7.	الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ "Those who believe and whose hearts find tranquillity through the remembrance of Allah."	QS. Ar-Raad [13]: 28	وَتَطْمَئِنُّ
8.	أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ "Verily, it is only through the remembrance of Allah that hearts find tranquillity."	QS. Ar-Raad [13]: 28	تَطْمَئِنُّ
9.	إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ "Except for the one who is compelled while his heart remains tranquil in faith."	QS. An-Nahl [16]: 106	مُطْمَئِنٌّ
10.	وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ ءَامِنَةً مُطْمَئِنَّةً "And Allah sets forth the parable of a town that was once secure, peaceful, and content."	QS. An-Nahl [16]: 112	مُطْمَئِنَّةً
11.	قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَلَائِكَةٌ يَمْشُونَ مُطْمَئِنِينَ "Say, if there had been angels walking tranquilly upon the earth..."	QS. Al-Isra [17]: 95	مُطْمَئِنِينَ
12.	فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ خَيْرٌ اطْمَأَنَّ بِهِ "Thus, when goodness befalls him, he is thereby rendered tranquil."	QS. Al-Hajj [22]: 11	اطْمَأَنَّ
13.	يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ "O soul that is serene and at peace."	QS. Al-Fajr [89]: 27	الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

Categorisation of the Meanings of Al-Thuma'ninah in al-Qurtubi's Exegesis

1 Al-Thuma'ninah as Epistemological Tranquillity in Faith

a) QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 260

In QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 260, Allah states through the words of Ibrahim, *قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَأَتَّبِعَنَّهُ* "Ibrahim replied, 'I have indeed believed, yet only so that my heart may become more at rest.'" This statement indicates that his request was not born of

doubt, but rather to attain a higher level of inner certainty by combining revealed knowledge with direct observation. The term *كَيْطَمِينٍ* derives from *الطمأنينة*, meaning calm, stable, and settled, expressing a form of tranquillity unshaken by uncertainty. This lexical sense aligns with the concept of *thuma'ninah* in worship, as emphasised in the prophetic instruction regarding bowing in prayer, "ثُمَّ ارْكَعْ حَتَّى تَطْمَئِنَّ رَاكِعًا", which underscores physical stillness as a reflection of inner composure (Al-Qurtubi, n.d.-a).

Scholarly explanations affirm that the tranquillity of the heart is achieved when one's mind rests upon what it firmly believes. Reflecting upon resurrection is not considered an error; instead, it represents a commendable form of contemplation that strengthens faith and deepens awareness of divine power. Ibrahim sought direct demonstration not out of hesitation, but so that his conviction might reach perfect steadiness, free from any intellectual disturbance. This illustrates that the pursuit of clarity is an integral part of a sound and dynamic faith.

b) QS. Al-Ma'idah (5): 113

In al-Qurtubi's exegesis of QS. al-Ma'idah [5]: 113, the concept of *al-thuma'ninah* is understood as an inner serenity arising from the strengthening of conviction, and not as an expression of doubt regarding the power of Allah. The request of the *hawariyyun* for a table spread to be sent down from heaven is not interpreted as scepticism towards the prophethood of 'Isa, but rather as an effort to attain firmness of faith through direct experience of divine signs (Al-Qurtubi, n.d.-b). Al-Qurtubi emphasises that faith has levels, and at certain stages human beings require spiritual reinforcement so that their conviction becomes more firmly established. *Thuma'ninah* in this verse represents a state of tranquil and steadfast inner composure, born from witnessing the greatness of Allah, not from doubt or weakness of belief. The verse affirms that the quest for inner calm through divine signs is a legitimate part of the dynamics of faith in the Qur'anic perspective.

In the modern era, characterised by the abundance of information and frequently conflicting viewpoints, many people experience confusion, uncertainty, anxiety, and even crises of identity (Ananda et al., 2025). Such conditions may lead to mental health problems, including existential anxiety and inner unrest. *Al-thuma'ninah* as epistemological tranquillity becomes essential because it enables a person to possess clear and mature conviction. With such conviction, one is not easily confused or troubled, and possesses a firm grounding in understanding and navigating life.

2 Al-Thuma'ninah as Psychospiritual Tranquillity in One's Relationship with Allah

a) QS. Ar-Ra'du (13): 28

In the interpretation of QS. ar-Ra'd [13]: 28, al-Qurtubi explains that the phrase *الذين آمنوا وتطمئن قلوبهم بذكر الله* refers to the believers who attain inner tranquillity through their spiritual relationship with Allah. This tranquillity (*thuma'ninah*) is not merely a psychological state but the result of a heart connected to tawhid and an awareness of Allah's majesty. According to al-Qurtubi, the meaning of *dhikrullah* in this verse is broad. Some scholars interpret it as verbal remembrance, namely mentioning the name of Allah; remembrance with the intellect, that is, learning through research and observation; and remembrance through action, namely prayer, worship, and fasting.

Mujahid, Qatadah and others stated, "With the Qur'an." Whereas according to Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, it means with His command. Muqatil said, "It means with His promise." And Ibn 'Abbas said, "It means with the oath by His name." That is, their hearts find tranquillity by remembering His bounty and blessings, just as their hearts fall in awe when remembering His justice, recompense, and decree. There is an opinion stating that what is meant by *بذكر الله* is that they remember Allah and contemplate His signs so that they know with certainty the perfection of His power. Thus, according to al-Qurtubi, thuma'ninah in this verse is not merely emotional comfort but the tranquillity of faith that arises from knowing, internalising, and obeying Allah, enabling the heart to become firm, untroubled, and not shaken by worldly circumstances (Al-Qurtubi, n.d.).

b) QS. Al-Fajr (89): 27

This verse is one of the strongest depictions of the peak of spiritual tranquillity in the Qur'an. According to al-Qurtubi, what is meant by *النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ* is As-Sakinah al-muuqinah (that which is calm and certain). Certain that Allah is its Lord. This is stated by Mujahid and others. Al-Qurtubi explains that thuma'ninah in this verse does not only denote psychological calmness but a deeper, enduring tranquillity of faith. This tranquillity emerges from profound belief in Allah's promise, willingness to accept His decree, and steadfast obedience. With such a condition, the soul is not easily shaken by trials, blessings, or worldly grief, as its entire orientation is directed towards Allah.

According to al-Qurtubi, nafs al-mutma'innah is the soul of the believer who has reached the maqam of rida, namely the state in which one accepts all of Allah's decrees with openness, whether blessings or trials. Therefore, the call "irji'i ila rabbiki radiyatan marḍiyyah" is a form of Divine honour for the soul that has succeeded in subduing its desires and binding itself completely to obedience. Al-thuma'ninah in QS. Al-Fajr [89]: 27 represents the highest form of spiritual tranquillity born from mature faith, surrender to Allah, and harmony between belief and action. This tranquillity is not temporary but a stable condition of the soul worthy of attaining honour in the Hereafter.

c) QS. Ali-Imran (3): 126

According to al-Qurtubi's commentary, QS. Ali 'Imran [3]: 126 affirms that the help of angels is not the source of victory itself but a psychological means to calm and strengthen the hearts of the believers. The pronoun "hu" in the phrase *جَعَلَهُ* may refer to the assistance of the angels, the promise of help, the number of reinforcements, or the accompanying divine sign, all of which function as mental reinforcement rather than the determining factor of victory. The lam in the phrase *ولتطمئن قلوبكم به* is lam at-ta'lil (the lam of cause or purpose). It indicates the Divine intention, which is that the hearts of the believers may be reassured. Hence, al-Qurtubi emphasises that true victory comes entirely from Allah, not from the number of troops or material strength, while the victory of the disbelievers is merely an illusion that brings neither blessing nor true honour.

d) QS. Al-Anfal (8): 10

In QS. al-Anfal [8]: 10, al-Qurtubi explains that the descent of the angels is not the principal factor of victory but a means to cultivate al-thuma'ninah (inner tranquillity) within the believers. This tranquillity functions to remove fear, strengthen conviction, and fortify the believers' morale in facing the enemy. As in the interpretation of QS. Ali 'Imran [3]: 126, which stresses that al-thuma'ninah arises through the promise and presence of angelic assistance rather than physical strength or the number of troops. QS. al-Anfal [8]: 10 conveys the same meaning but with stronger emphasis that angelic assistance is not a source of victory at all; rather, it is a psychological means to calm and strengthen the heart. Victory remains purely from Allah. Thuma'ninah is understood as a psychospiritual state that renders the heart firm in the Divine promise, not dependent on physical power or numerical force.

The relevance of al-thuma'ninah, particularly in understanding its impact on mental health in the modern era, is clear. Many people face intense pressures such as prolonged stress, emotional exhaustion (burnout), and anxiety due to occupational demands or social life. Such conditions can disrupt mental health and lead to inner restlessness (Yuwono, 2010). In modern psychology, *thuma'ninah* aligns with the concept of religious coping, which has been shown to help individuals reduce stress by strengthening their sense of meaning and emotional stability. The findings of Ginanjar, Rahman, and Tajiri (2025) further support this, demonstrating that spiritual practices such as dhikr and supplication are significantly associated with improved mental health among students facing academic pressure. Al-thuma'ninah as psychospiritual tranquillity becomes essential, for remembrance, supplication, and spiritual awareness can help individuals confront such pressures (Wahyuni, 2025). Closeness to Allah can cultivate a sense of security in the heart, reduce anxiety, and help maintain emotional balance.

3 Al-Thuma'ninah as Steadfastness of Faith under Conditions of Pressure

a) QS. An-Nahl (16): 106

In QS. an-Nahl [16]: 106, al-Qurtubi explains that the phrase *إلا من أكره وقلبه مطمئن بالإيمان* refers to a person who is compelled to utter disbelief while his heart remains firm in faith. Al-thuma'ninah here signifies the steadfastness of conviction that settles within the heart, not merely emotional calmness. The measure of faith in this verse is not verbal expression, but the inner condition that does not change even when under pressure or threat.

Al-Qurtubi emphasises that a person who is forced to pronounce disbelief is not considered to have left the faith so long as his heart remains resolute in affirming the truth. This indicates that thuma'ninah functions as a benchmark of genuine faith, as well as the basis for the permissibility of taqiyyah in emergency circumstances. Thus, the meaning of al-thuma'ninah in this verse is the steadfastness of inner faith that is not shaken by external pressure, not merely psychological calmness or a passive attitude.

Many people face social pressure, occupational demands, as well as value conflicts that may generate stress, anxiety, and emotional instability. This condition may weaken mental health and make a person easily influenced by the environment. Faizi and Ichsan (2023) explain that resilience in the perspective of Islamic psychology

encompasses several important components, including emotional regulation, self-control, optimism, and self-efficacy, all of which originate from strengthening the values of faith within an individual. This is consistent with al-Qurtubi's depiction of thuma'ninah as the steadfastness of inner faith that enables a person to remain firm even when facing pressure from outside.

4 Al-Thuma'ninah as Social and Existential Tranquillity in Communal Life

a) QS. AN-Nahl (16): 112

The statement of Allah SWT *وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً* "And Allah has set forth a parable of a town." This relates to the mention of the polytheists. Allah describes a town that previously lived in a state of *ءامنة مطمئنة* (secure and tranquil), but was later afflicted with hunger and fear as a consequence of disbelief in Allah's blessings. According to al-Qurtubi, al-thuma'ninah in this verse signifies tranquillity of life that is outward and social in nature, namely a condition of security, stability, and prosperity experienced by a community in daily life (Al-Qurtubi, n.d.).

Al-Qurtubi explains that such tranquillity is not merely inner serenity, but an objective condition in the form of security, sufficiency of provision, and social order. The town lived without fear, needs were fulfilled, and life proceeded in stability. However, when its people denied Allah's blessings, that tranquillity was withdrawn and replaced with *الجوع والخوف* (hunger and fear). The loss of thuma'ninah becomes a moral consequence of ingratitude for blessings, as well as a warning that social security and prosperity depend entirely upon the ethical relationship of human beings with Allah.

Al-Qurtubi emphasises that al-thuma'ninah in QS. an-Nahl [16]: 112 represents a form of social and existential tranquillity, distinct from personal inner calmness in other verses, yet still rooted in one principle, namely obedience to Allah as the source of life's stability.

b) QS. Al-Isra' (17): 95

This verse explains that if the inhabitants of the earth were angels who lived and moved about in tranquillity (thuma'ninah) on the earth, then Allah would have sent down a messenger from among the angels as well. However, since the inhabitants of the earth are human beings, the messenger sent also comes from among humankind.

According to al-Qurtubi, the meaning of thuma'ninah in this verse is not inner calmness, but a state of dwelling, living in stability, and functioning normally on the earth. This means that angels, by nature, do not live in a settled manner like humans; they exist in a different realm. Therefore, if angels truly lived in the same way as humans (walking, residing, and carrying out activities on earth), then it would be appropriate for the messenger sent to also be from among angels.

However, because humans live with bodily limitations, physical needs, and particular social conditions, divine wisdom requires that the messenger sent should be from among humans, so that he may become a realistic model and be emulated directly.

Social instability, economic insecurity, and an unconducive environment may trigger mental health problems within society, such as social stress, anxiety, and increased psychological conflict. This situation causes communities to feel insecure

and generates collective unrest. Al-thuma'ninah as social and existential tranquillity therefore becomes important, as it emphasises the necessity of security, stability, and prosperity in communal life. If social conditions are more orderly and basic needs are fulfilled, levels of stress, anxiety, and psychological conflict may decline, thereby improving the mental health of society (Purwaningsih et al., 2023).

5 Al-Thuma'ninah as Illusory Tranquillity Derived Solely from Worldly Matters

a) QS. Yunus (10): 7

The phrase *وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا* indicates a human psychological state that feels calm, satisfied, and content with worldly life, to the extent of making it the ultimate goal of existence. The expression *واطمأننوا بما* denotes an inner condition that ceases to seek orientation towards the Hereafter because it already feels sufficient with material pleasures. Al-Qurtubi asserts that such tranquillity is not praiseworthy, since it arises from being content with the world and heedlessness of the signs of Allah, as affirmed in the continuation of the verse *والذين هم عن آياتنا غافلون* namely those who do not take i'tibar (lessons) and do not reflect.²⁸ Thuma'ninah here instead becomes a sign of weakened spiritual awareness, namely a deceptive tranquillity that prevents human beings from awareness of faith and responsibility in the Hereafter.

b) QS. Al-Hajj (22): 11

According to al-Qurtubi, this verse depicts a type of person whose faith is fragile and not deeply rooted, namely one who worships Allah only on the basis of personal interest and comfort. The term *على حَرْفٍ* indicates an unstable position, like standing on the edge of a cliff, easily slipping when facing trials.²⁹

Al-thuma'ninah is interpreted as conditional tranquillity, not genuine tranquillity of faith. A person feels calm when obtaining worldly benefit, but loses tranquillity when encountering hardship. Al-Qurtubi considers this a false tranquillity because it is not grounded in strong faith. In his view, true faith requires steadfastness in both ease and difficulty. If tranquillity appears only when worldly benefit is attained, then it is not thuma'ninah imaniyyah, but rather shallow and opportunistic religiosity.

Many people attempt to seek tranquillity through material wealth, popularity, or excessive worldly pleasures. Mulyani (2025) explains that in the context of modern life characterised by materialism and consumerism, the values of *zuhud* in Islam offer an alternative conscious lifestyle capable of balancing worldly and *ukhrawi* needs. At the psychological dimension, *zuhud* has been shown to contribute to the control of desires as well as the improvement of mental health, because individuals who are not excessively attached to the world possess more stable inner tranquillity and are not easily shaken by changes in material conditions. This is consistent with al-Qurtubi's interpretation that genuine thuma'ninah imaniyyah emerges precisely from the freedom of the heart from excessive dependence on worldly matters, not from their fulfilment.

6 Al-Thuma'ninah as Tranquillity in the Practice of Worship

a) QS. An-Nisa' (4): 103

In QS. an-Nisa' [4]: 103, the phrase *فإذا اطمانتم* indicates a condition of safety and the disappearance of fear after a critical situation, such as war. The term *itmi'nan*, according to the exegetes, signifies tranquillity of the heart after anxiety and danger have passed. In that condition, Allah commands, *فأقيموا الصلاة*, namely to perform the prayer properly in accordance with its pillars and regulations, both in terms of procedure and number of units, when one has returned to a normal state.

Furthermore, the statement of Allah *إن الصلاة كانت على المؤمنين كتابا موقوتا* emphasises that prayer is an obligation whose times have been precisely determined. According to Zaid bin Aslam, the word *mauquta* signifies something that possesses clear time limits and must not be neglected. This term derives from the root word *waqqata*, which indicates the determination of a specific time. The use of the word *كتابا* in the form of a masculine verbal noun explains that the obligation of prayer is fixed, binding, and structured, both in terms of legal status and its implementation within the time span prescribed by the Shari'ah. In this verse, Allah commands the believers that when conditions have become safe, they should perform the prayer perfectly, no longer in the form of concession (*salat khauf*), but with complete pillars, procedures, and prescribed times.

Many people face mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating due to irregular lifestyles and the pressures of daily activities. This condition may cause the mind to become quickly fatigued and life to feel less balanced. *Al-thuma'ninah* in the practice of worship therefore becomes important, because worship performed calmly and regularly can help to soothe the mind. This routine functions as spiritual mindfulness that may reduce stress, enhance focus, and create an orderliness of life that supports mental health (Marisa & Jamaludin, 2025).

Tabel 2 Comparison of *Al-Thuma'ninah* Categories and Previous Research

Category of Al-Thuma'ninah	Relevant Previous Studies	Focus of Previous Studies	Identified Research Gap	Contribution of the Present Study
Epistemological tranquillity (Q. 2:260; 5:113)	Rifaannudin (2023); Maghfiroh (2025)	Semantic analysis of t-m-'-n; Izutsu's semantic framework	Did not connect epistemic tranquillity with classical exegesis or psychological theories	Integrates al-Qurtubi's exegesis with epistemic confidence theory and existential certainty
Psychospiritual tranquillity (Q. 13:28; 89:27)	Ginanjar, T., Rahman, A. A., & Tajiri, (2025)	Dhikr and emotional regulation; The concept of religious coping	Lacked engagement with classical tafsir categories of thuma'ninah	Combines classical exegesis with religious coping theory (Pargament) to explain spiritual stability

Iman-based resilience under pressure (Q. 16:106)	Faizi & Ichsan (2023);	Islamic psychological resilience; "survival faith"	Did not analyse Q. 16:106 as a model of meaning-focused coping	Proposes a Qur'anic resilience model grounded in al-Qurtubi's interpretation
Social and existential tranquillity (Q. 16:112; 17:95)	Akib, M. M. M., Ishak, H., Zabidi, A. F. M., Sa'ari, C. Z., Muhsin, S. B. S., & Yahya, (2025)	The impact of Islamic psychotherapy on adolescent spiritual well-being	Did not discuss thuma'ninah in classical tafsir	Positions thuma'ninah as an indicator of moral-social equilibrium based on Qur'anic ethics
Pseudo-tranquillity rooted in worldliness (Q. 10:7; 22:11)	Mulyani (2025);	Materialism, well-being, and psychological vulnerability	Did not relate negative thuma'ninah to contemporary consumerism	Frames classical exegesis as a critique of pseudo-well-being and materialistic dependence
Ritual tranquillity in worship (Q. 4:103)	Aini, P. R., Astuti, R. F., Syamsiah, S., Hasibuan, R. F., & Alwi, (2024)	Islamic psychotherapy is effective in improving mental health and reducing depressive symptoms through prayer, zikir, reading the Qur'an.	Did not consider thuma'ninah as the transition stage to ritual normality	Introduces the concept of "ritual stabilisation" through classical tafsir of prayer-related verses

CONCLUSION

The interpretation of the term al-thuma'ninah in Tafsir al-Qurtubi demonstrates that the concept carries diverse and contextual meanings within the Qur'an. Through an analysis of the verses containing its derivations, al-Qurtubi understands al-thuma'ninah as tranquillity that may relate to the strengthening of conviction, the depth of one's spiritual relationship with Allah, steadfastness of faith under pressure, social stability, and even a form of illusory calm arising from worldly orientation. This indicates that al-thuma'ninah is a multidimensional concept that not only describes an emotional condition but also reflects the quality of faith and the human relationship with God. In the context of modern life, the concept of al-thuma'ninah holds strong relevance to mental health, as it describes a psychospiritual balance that helps individuals manage anxiety, strengthen mental resilience, and

discover a deeper sense of life's meaning. Tranquillity rooted in faith, remembrance, and awareness of life's purpose provides a stable inner foundation, enabling individuals to face the pressures and dynamics of life with a more adaptive and meaningful attitude.

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