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From Qur'anic Descriptions of Paradise to Landscape Design: Deriving Principles of Landscape Architecture

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

This research aims to formulate principles of landscape architecture based on the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise (*Jannah*). The main research question is whether normative principles for landscape planning, landscape architecture, and landscape management can be derived from these descriptions. This study employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical method, drawing on seven authoritative exegetical sources. To clarify the inferential process, a three-stage analytical model was developed using directed content analysis, linking the Qur'anic verse to the extracted concept, the underlying human need, and the resulting design principle. Accordingly, twenty Qur'anic terms describing Paradise were interpreted within five categories, from which seven landscape design principles were derived: sustainability (emphasizing eternity and permanence); expansiveness and continuity (emphasizing extended shade, flowing rivers, and boundless vastness); health promotion (emphasizing variety, continuity, and easy access to fruits); comfort orientation (emphasizing security, tranquility, and the elimination of pollutants); social cohesion (emphasizing facing couches, companionship, and collective servants); qualitative excellence and human dignity (emphasizing elevated chambers, fine materials, and overlooking landscapes); and family cohesion (emphasizing the presence of spouses, family entry, and pavilions). These principles can serve as a normative framework for evaluating and designing urban open spaces, gardens, and public landscapes in the Islamic world.

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KEYWORDS: Qur'an and Architecture, Paradise in the Qur'an, Landscape Architecture, Landscape Design Principles, Islamic Landscape Architecture, Environmental Studies, Environmental Design.

1. Introduction

The Holy Qur'an, as the final divinely revealed scripture, contains, in addition to its spiritual and moral guidance, rich and precise descriptions of the environment and landscape. Among these descriptions, the verses pertaining to the eschatological Paradise (*Jannah*) hold a distinctive place, verses that, using sensory and tangible language, describe gardens beneath which rivers flow, fruits within easy reach, extensive and enduring shade, and peace and security prevailing among their inhabitants. The term *Jannah* and its derivatives appear more than eighty times in the Qur'an, a significant portion of these occurrences being dedicated to the description of Paradise (al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī 1992, 198; Qorashi 1998, 2:45). What is remarkable about these descriptions is their precision, repetition, and environmental-spatial detail. The Qur'an does not merely mention Paradise as an otherworldly promise; rather, it depicts its physical, visual, social, and service-oriented qualities in meticulous detail. This characteristic raises a fundamental question for researchers in the fields of environment and landscape: are these descriptions merely motivational and exhortative in nature, offering glad tidings, or can they serve as an ideal model for organizing human living environments in this world?

Contemporary landscape architecture theorists such as Spirn (1998) and Corner (2006) emphasize that landscape is not merely a visual or ecological phenomenon but also carries meaning, value, and pattern. Within this framework, landscape is defined as a realm of human habitation in which the reciprocal relationships between humanity and nature are formed within a context of meaning, function, beauty, and temporal processes, and which requires an insightful and contemplative perspective (Thompson 2017). Therefore, the exploration of a paradisiacal model for landscape design is legitimate and appropriate, provided that a distinction is maintained between the reality of Paradise (an eschatological and inaccessible reality) and the paradisiacal model (the principles and values embedded in its descriptions) (Clark 2010). In other words, the Qur'an depicts an ideal and directional vision rather than providing an executive blueprint.

The present research, drawing on the aforementioned epistemological foundations and employing a three-stage model of "verse → concept →

human need → design principle," seeks to address existing gaps. The main contributions of this research are threefold: first, it provides explicit epistemological foundations for deriving principles from the descriptions of Paradise by distinguishing between reality and model; second, it develops a transparent methodological mechanism for transforming Qur'anic descriptions into normative principles; and third, it extends the scope of principles beyond mere visual elements and the limited scale of the garden to encompass landscape planning, architecture, and management at multiple scales. Thus, this article endeavors to demonstrate how the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise, which have hitherto been interpreted primarily within the framework of eschatological promises or visual metaphors at the garden scale, can, through a coherent methodological approach, serve as an inspirational source for landscape design at broader scales.

2. Literature Review

Research related to the connection between Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise and landscape architecture can be divided into two main categories: (a) comparative-visual studies that have examined the manifestation of paradisiacal elements in Islamic gardens (particularly the Persian garden); and (b) contemporary studies with methodological and ecotheological approaches that have sought to extract design principles and frameworks from Qur'anic verses.

a) Comparative-visual studies: Clark (2010) identifies the main elements of the paradisiacal garden as including water, shade, the fourfold (*chahārbāgh*) design, enclosure, fruit-bearing trees, fragrance, and birdsong, and maintains that Islamic gardens are a preview and mirror of the paradisiacal gardens. Pourjafar et al. (2017), emphasizing the verses of Surah al-Wāqiʿah, identified the manifestation of elements such as flowing rivers, extensive shade, elevated chambers, and diverse fruits in the Persian garden. Mahdavi Nezhad et al. (2014), focusing on Surah al-Raḥmān, identified the archetypes of the Persian garden in Qur'anic verses. Yaghooti and Talebpour (2024), drawing upon the exegesis of *al-Mīzān*, conducted a comparative analysis of the elements of the Persian garden and the descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an and confirmed a divinely ordained harmony between the promised Paradise and worldly life. However, they considered the Persian garden an imperfect embodiment of the archetypal model. Nottagh et al. (2024), in a survey study of 200 visitors to eleven historical gardens, found that internal and psychological components (security, health, and spiritual tranquility) had a greater impact than visual

components on the perception of Qur'anic teachings.

b) Methodological and ecotheological studies: Kamil and Yunos (2015), utilizing the exegesis *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān*, developed a framework for the contemporary Islamic garden based on the paradisiacal image in Surah al-Wāqiʿah. Kamil (2019), in his doctoral dissertation, analyzed the exegeses of Ibn Kathīr and *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān* to develop a framework for the Islamic contemplative garden and found that Malaysian gardens focused primarily on physical aspects while neglecting the spiritual dimension (contemplation and invocation). Andriawan (2025), in a study entitled *Heavenly Ecotheology*, analyzed the verses describing Paradise and, drawing on classical and contemporary exegeses, argued that the descriptions of Paradise are a symbolic expression of cosmic order and ecological well-being. The study also derived principles such as water purity, biodiversity, continuous renewability, climatic balance, and incorruptibility from the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise. Asrun (2025) examined the role of Islamic principles, *tawḥīd*, *mīzān*, *khilāfah*, and *iḥsān*, in shaping landscape architecture and demonstrated that contemporary Islamic gardens in Indonesia and Malaysia represent evolving practices aimed at strengthening cultural identity, ecological resilience, and spirituality in contemporary urbanism.

Among recent studies, the work of Kolkailah (2023) adopted a distinct approach. Rather than focusing on the direct descriptions of Paradise, Kolkailah examined four Qur'anic narratives featuring gardens and formulates ethical principles such as gratitude, humility, justice, kindness, sustainability, and biodiversity conservation within a tripartite framework (centred on God, humanity, and nature). By emphasizing the normative dimension of the narratives, this research addressed the methodological shortcoming arising from the absence of an explicit method for deriving principles and, by extending its scope beyond gardens to encompass social justice, universal access, and ecological sustainability, drew attention to the neglect of broader scales.

A review of the literature reveals that, despite the richness of comparative-visual research and recent efforts to develop methodological frameworks, three major shortcomings remain. First, most studies have moved directly from verse to design principle without explaining the rationale or process underlying the derivation of principles. Second, the dominant approach has been visual metaphor at the garden scale, while principles such as macro-scale sustainability, equitable access, and family-oriented planning at scales beyond the garden (neighborhood, city, and region) have received less attention. Third, the relationship between the

paradisiacal model and the various scales of landscape design and planning has not been theoretically articulated.

3. Theoretical Framework

The term landscape carries a meaning beyond scenery or a visual prospect. According to the definition of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), landscape architecture refers to the research, planning, design, and management of the external environment and spaces, both within and outside the built environment, as well as their conservation and sustainable development (IFLA 2015). Murphy (2016, 10) defines landscape as "a realm of human living environment" in which reciprocal relationships between humanity and nature are formed within a context of meaning, function, beauty, and temporal processes. The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) emphasizes that the term environment carries a passive and background connotation, whereas landscape implies purposeful design and human experience (Silva-Santisteban 2024).

In the Qur'an, the act of gazing upon the natural environment is consistently associated with contemplation, reflection, and insight. Verse Q. 6:99 illustrates this meaning: *"Look at its fruit as it fructifies and ripens. Indeed there are signs in that for a people who have faith"* (Q. 6:99). Tabataba'i (1996, 7: 380) states that observing the fruit at its bearing and ripening increases the believer in insight and certitude. Thus, the Qur'anic conception of landscape transcends mere observation and culminates in reflection, gratitude, and faith.

In this study, landscape refers to a realm of human living environment in which reciprocal relationships between humanity and nature are formed within a context of meaning, function, beauty, and temporal processes, and which requires an insightful and contemplative perspective. The fundamental distinction between landscape and environment lies in the fact that the environment is the physical and functional substrate of life (Barry 1999), whereas landscape encompasses humanity's meaningful relationship with that substrate, a relationship that includes sensory perception, cultural meanings, collective memories, aesthetic values, and spiritual dimensions (Murphy 2016). Thus, the environment is quantitative and measurable, while landscape is qualitative, semantic, and relational. The aim of this research is to extract the principles of the paradisiacal landscape, rather than merely to identify the physical characteristics of the environment of Paradise.

Landscape architecture is a discipline concerned with the design, planning, and management of open spaces (including urban, suburban, extra-urban, and natural spaces). Murphy (2016, 5) defines it as the design discipline dedicated to understanding and shaping landscape and describes its goal as guiding change in landscape form to create and maintain useful, healthy, and attractive built and natural environments. In this research, landscape architecture is defined as the process of organizing open spaces to provide a setting for human presence, movement, contemplation, reflection, gratitude, and social interactions. This definition is inspired by verses that present reflection and gratitude as the ultimate purposes of gazing upon the landscape (Q. 13:3; 16:69; 36:35). The importance of articulating this discipline in Islamic society stems from the fact that Islamic civilization has a rich heritage of creating meaningful landscapes, gardens that were designed not merely for production or recreation, but also for contemplation, tranquility, and remembrance of Paradise (Khalilnezhad et al. 2024).

In this research, the environmental study of Paradise refers to an approach that regards the environment as the outcome of physical-spatial characteristics, natural elements, edible elements, facilities and environmental furnishings, and socio-cultural features (Pourjafar et al. 2017). This approach, in contrast to a reductionist perspective that focuses solely on a single element, examines the relationships among elements and the qualities emerging from these relationships. The environmental study of Paradise is a preliminary step toward recognizing the various dimensions of Paradise's environment; however, the principles ultimately derived, those of landscape design, fall within the domain of landscape.

Answering the question of whether principles for landscape design can be derived from the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise requires the clarification of epistemological foundations. This section presents three theoretical foundations that respectively elucidate the rationale, methodology, and limitations of this derivation.

First, the Qur'an employs parables (*amthāl*) to convey abstract concepts through sensible imagery. Verse Q. 14:25 states: *"Allah draws these parables for mankind so that they may take admonition"* (Q. 14:25). This indicates that the purpose of Qur'anic parables is to prompt the audience toward admonition, rather than being merely literary ornamentation. Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (1992, 759) defines *mathal* as a statement about something that resembles a statement about something, with a similarity between them, so that one clarifies and portrays the other, and notes that it is the most general term for similarity, encompassing resemblance in essence, quality, quantity, or measure. Qorashi (1992, 6:233-237) comments

that most instances of *mathal* in the Qur'an follow al-Rāghib's definition, though it also appears in other senses; God brings a narrative, story, or saying and then applies the intended meaning to it, so that the parable serves to make the matter understood and to satisfy the listener's mind. From this perspective, the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise with flowing rivers, abundant shade, and accessible fruits are not merely a report about the unseen but also can be understood as expressing an ideal order and ecological well-being that humanity is also called to approximate on earth (Andriawan 2025).

Second, the distinction between the "Reality of Paradise" and the "Paradisiacal Model": One of the most significant pitfalls in research is the conflation of the reality of Paradise (an eschatological and inaccessible reality) with the paradisiacal model (the principles and values embedded in its descriptions). This distinction has its roots in the Qur'an itself. Verse Q. 2:25 states: *"whenever they are provided with their fruit for nourishment, they will say, 'This is what we were provided before,' and they were given something resembling it"* (Q. 2:25). Qur'anic exegetes have interpreted *mutashābihan* (in resemblance) as signifying similarity to worldly fruits, rather than identity (al-Ṭabrisī 1993, 1:215; Makarem Shirazi 1995, 1:146). Tabataba'i (1996, 1:242) explicitly states that resemblance does not mean complete likeness; rather, the inhabitants of Paradise find those blessings similar to worldly blessings, while their reality transcends them.

Javadi Amoli (2009, 2:351) also maintains that the resemblance of paradisiacal fruits to worldly ones indicates that worldly fruits are signs (*āyāt*) of paradisiacal fruits. Izutsu (2002) regards *Jannah* as a value-concept that evokes a constellation of positive attributes. The present research does not claim that the "Reality of Paradise" can be reproduced on earth; rather, it contends that the "Paradisiacal Model," the set of principles and values embedded in the descriptions of Paradise (such as continuity, security, health, dignity, sociality, and family cohesion), can serve as a normative framework for landscape design. Clark (2010) likewise points out that the Islamic garden functions as a remembrance of Paradise and an expression of longing for it, rather than a reproduction of Paradise.

Third, the relationship between "description" and "prescription" in the verses of Paradise: The Qur'an is a book of guidance, and its guidance includes both the articulation of religious obligations and prohibitions and the delineation of models and ideals (Javadi Amoli 2009, 1:92). Tabataba'i (1996, 18:370) states that the description of the blessings of Paradise, in addition to conveying knowledge of the unseen and offering glad tidings, also constitutes a form of encouragement to righteous action. The argument

that the description of an ideal state can serve as a basis for practical prescription is grounded in Qur'anic virtue ethics. By depicting the ideal life in the form of Paradise, the Qur'an indicates a direction for human action.

According to Kolkailah (2023), the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise can provide a normative model for evaluating and improving worldly living environments. For example, when the Qur'an speaks of extensive and enduring shade in Paradise, this description carries at least two practical messages: it encourages gratitude for the blessing of shade and the creation of enduring shade in the living environment. Therefore, deriving design principles from the descriptions of Paradise is not a departure from the Qur'an's mission of guidance but rather an expression of that mission, which directs humanity toward the improvement of the living environment.

In sum, these three theoretical foundations provide an epistemological framework that enables the present research to move, with methodological confidence, from the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise to principles of landscape planning, architecture, and management.

4. Research Methodology

This study is applied-developmental in purpose and employs a qualitative descriptive-analytical method to derive normative principles from foundational textual sources, namely, the Qur'an and its exegetical literature. In qualitative research, authenticity lies in understanding meaning and discovering patterns within the text (Drisko 2013). Furthermore, because the study seeks to derive normative prescriptions for landscape design, it is normative in nature rather than positivist, which focuses on describing "what is" (Khadem Alizadeh & Ghafor Zadeh 2016).

The study population consists of all verses of the Qur'an that describe eschatological Paradise. The key search terms included *nahr* (river), *ghurfah* (chamber), *surur* (couches), *fākihah* (fruit), *quṭūf* (clusters), *māʾ* (water), *ẓill* (shade), *khiyām* (pavilions), *rafraf wa ʿabqarī* (fine carpets and splendid furnishings), *ʿarḍ* (breadth), *bāb* (gate), *salām* (peace), *rizq* (provision), *wildān mukhalladūn* (eternal youths), *rawḥ wa rayḥān* (comfort and fragrance), *jannah* (garden), *ḥadāʾiq wa aʿnāb* (gardens and vineyards), *sidr makhḍūd* (lote trees without thorns), *ṭalḥ manḍūd* (banana trees with piled fruit), and *ʿuyūn* (springs).

To facilitate precise interpretation of these concepts, seven authoritative exegetical sources representing diverse methodological approaches, rational, narrational, social, and mystical, were consulted: *al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr*

al-Qurʾān (Tabataba'i 1996), *Tafsīr Nimūneh* (Makarem Shirazi 1995), *Majmaʿ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (al-Ṭabrisī 1993), *Tafsīr Nūr* (Qara'ati 2004), *Aḥsan al-Ḥadīth* (Qorashi 1998), *al-Ṣāfī* (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1994), and *Bayān al-Saʿādah fī Maqāmāt al-ʿIbādah* (Gunābādī 1993).

The methodological core of this research is a three-stage analytical model developed through directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The model follows the inferential sequence verse → Qur'anic concept → human need → design principle. Although this sequence comprises four conceptual components, it involves three analytical stages, with the verse serving as the starting point rather than as a separate stage:

- **Stage 1:** Identification of the Qur'anic concept.

  The relevant verse is identified, and its underlying concept is extracted through analysis of the verse and consultation of exegetical sources.

- **Stage 2:** Identification of the underlying human need.

  The human need associated with the Qur'anic concept is identified through the technique of inversion. The researcher asks: "If this attribute were absent or violated in this world, what human need would remain unfulfilled?" The resulting deficiency is interpreted as an indication of the human need that the presence of the corresponding attribute in the descriptions of Paradise is understood to address. For example, in the case of *ẓill mamdūd* (extended shade), the inversion question is: "If extended shade were absent, what deficiency would humanity experience?" The answer is thermal discomfort and distress caused by intense heat. The corresponding human need is therefore defined as "the need for sustained thermal comfort and ease of presence in open spaces."

- **Stage 3:** Formulation of the design principle.

  The identified human need is translated into a general design strategy applicable to contemporary landscape architecture. The principles formulated in this study are normative in nature, specifying what ought to be done to address the identified needs. This stage, which connects human needs to design principles, is presented in a separate section following the interpretation of terms and conceptual analysis.

5. The Environmental and Landscape Characteristics of Paradise

An examination of all the verses pertaining to Paradise and consultation of numerous exegetical sources provide a relatively comprehensive picture of the environment and landscape of Paradise. In this article, only those terms are examined that appear in the verses describing eschatological Paradise and refer to a characteristic of its environment, landscape, or environmental, visual, or social amenities.

To identify and classify human needs, Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1943) and Max-Neef's theory of fundamental needs (Max-Neef 1991) have been employed. Maslow classifies needs into five levels, physiological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization, while Max-Neef categorizes them into nine classes: subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity, and freedom. Aly et al. (2018), by integrating these two frameworks, developed a model for analyzing human needs in designed landscapes. Pickett (2002) has also demonstrated that landscape design based on human needs enhances the sense of belonging and sustainability. In what follows, the inversion technique, which involves identifying the deficiency that would arise in the absence of a given attribute, is used to derive a corresponding human need for each term and relate it to the aforementioned theories.

5.1. Infrastructural and Spatial Elements

This category includes four concepts: *nahr* (river), *ghurfah* (chamber), *ʿarḍ* (breadth), and *bāb* (gate) (Table 1).

5.1.1. River (Nahr)

وَ بَشِّرِ الَّذينَ آمَنُوا وَ عَمِلُوا الصَّالِحاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْري مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهارُ (البقرة/٢٥)

And give good news to those who have faith and do righteous deeds, that for them shall be gardens with streams running in them.

In the exegetical sources, *nahr* is interpreted not merely as a watercourse but also as signifying abundance, spaciousness, and extensive open space (Tabataba'i 1996, 19:88; Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:80). The phrase *min taḥtihā al-anhār* indicates the flow of water beneath trees and buildings (Fayḍ Kāshānī 1994, 1:103). The limitation and discontinuity of space and water in this world disrupt access to nature and the provision of green-blue

infrastructure. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety) and Max-Neef's need for protection, as Aly et al. (2018) have also identified access to green spaces as a basic need addressed by landscape design. Accordingly, the need for access to extensive open spaces and sustainable green-blue infrastructure is identified.

5.1.2. Chamber (Ghurfah)

لكِنِ الَّذينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِنْ فَوْقِها غُرَفٌ مَبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْري مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهارُ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ لا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ الْميعادَ (الزمر/٢٠)

But as for those who are wary of their Lord, for them there will be lofty abodes with [other] lofty abodes built above them, with streams running beneath them a promise of Allah. Allah does not break His promise (Q. 39:20).

A *ghurfah* is an elevated dwelling with views overlooking the landscape, greater access to natural light, and more pleasant air (Tabataba'i 1996, 16:145; Qara'ati 2004, 9:451). Restricted views of the landscape and limited opportunities to benefit from light and air diminish the sense of dignity and quality of life. This need corresponds to Maslow's fourth level (esteem) and Max-Neef's need for identity. Pickett (2002) also regards views of the landscape as a factor in enhancing residents' dignity. Accordingly, the need for unobstructed views and desirable air quality is identified.

5.1.3. Breadth (ʿArḍ)

سابِقُوا إِلى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَ جَنَّةٍ عَرْضُها كَعَرْضِ السَّماءِ وَ الْأَرْضِ ... (الحديد/٢١)

Take the lead towards forgiveness from your Lord and a paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth... (Q. 57:21).

ʿArḍ refers to the absolute vastness of Paradise, rather than its width in contrast to its length (Tabataba'i 1996, 19:165; al-Ṭabrisī 1998, 237–238). The limitation and fragmentation of green spaces in this world deprive humanity of the benefits of nature at a large scale. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety) and Max-Neef's need for freedom (in the sense of access and freedom from spatial constraints). Aly et al. (2018) have identified the expansiveness and continuity of green spaces as factors that help reduce urban stress. Accordingly, the need for open and green spaces at various scales, from the neighborhood to areas beyond the urban environment, is identified.

5.1.4. Gate (Bāb)

وَ سِيقَ الَّذينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَراً حَتَّى إِذا جاؤُها وَ فُتِحَتْ أَبْوابُها وَ قالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُها سَلامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوها خالِدينَ (الزمر/۷۳)

Those who are wary of their Lord will be led to paradise in throngs. When they reach it, and its gates are opened, its keepers will say to them,"Peace be to you! You are welcome! Enter it to remain [forever]" (Q. 39:73).

The gardens of Paradise have gates through which angels enter with greetings and salutations (Qorashi 1998, 5:234). Another verse also suggests the presence of family members entering together (Q. 13:23). The absence of privacy, security, and appropriate entrance arrangements at the entrances of public spaces diminishes the sense of security and dignity. This need corresponds to Maslow's second and third levels (safety and belonging) and Max-Neef's needs for affection and protection. Pickett (2002) has emphasized the importance of privacy and territory in open spaces for ensuring family security. Accordingly, the need for dignified entrance design, psychological security, and opportunities for families to use these spaces together is identified.

Table 1. Interpretation of Infrastructural and Spatial Elements

Qur'anic Concept	Key Exegetical Meaning	Landscape Concept	Human Need
Nahr (river) Q. 2:25; 47:15	Amplitude and spaciousness; extensive space; flowing water beneath trees and buildings	Spatial expanse and accessible flowing life (water)	Access to extensive open spaces and sustainable green-blue infrastructure
Ghurfah (chamber) Q. 39:20; 29:58	Beautiful elevated dwelling; overlooking the landscape; more light and more pleasant air	Elevation and dignity-enhancement of the inhabitant through position	The right to a suitable view and desirable air quality
ʿArḍ (breadth) Q. 57:21	Absolute vastness of Paradise; not breadth in contrast to length; its immense breadth indicates the greatness of its length	Infinity and vastness beyond ordinary perception	The need for open and green spaces at various scales (from neighborhood to extra-urban)
Bāb (gate) Q. 13:23; 39:73	Gates through which angels enter; family entry into Paradise; angels welcoming from every gate	Privacy, entry formalities, security, and family	Design of dignified entrances, provision of psychological security, and enabling family presence

5.2. Natural and Plant Elements of the Landscape

This category includes five concepts: *ẓill* (shade), *sidr makḥḍūd* (lote-trees without thorns), *ṭalḥ manḍūd* (banana-trees with piled fruit), *ḥadāʾiq wa aʿnāb* (gardens and vineyards), and *ʿuyūn* (springs) (Table 2).

5.2.1. Shade (ẓill)

and extended shade(Q. 56:30). وَ ظِلٍّ مَمْدُودٍ (الواقعة/٣٠)

The shade is described as extensive, expansive, enduring, and dense, never diminishing (Tabataba'i 1996, 19:123; Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:222). The absence of enduring shade in this world deprives humanity of thermal comfort and the opportunity to remain in open spaces for extended periods. This need corresponds to Maslow's first level (physiological) and Max-Neef's need for leisure. Aly et al. (2018) have identified climate control and thermal comfort as key components of landscape design. Accordingly, the need for enduring shade and climate control in open spaces is identified.

5.2.2. Lote-trees without thorns (sidr makḥḍūd)

Amid thornless lote trees (Q. 56:28). في سِدْرٍ مَخْضُودٍ (الواقعة/٢٨)

The verse describes lush lote trees with dense shade, from which the thorns have been removed, growing in Paradise (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:220-221). The presence of irritating factors in the landscape and the absence of safety diminish the extent to which people can use these spaces. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety) and Max-Neef's need for protection. Accordingly, the need to eliminate physical barriers and hazards and improve safety in landscape design is identified.

5.2.3. Banana-trees with piled fruit (Ṭalḥ Manḍūd)

And bananas, neatly piled over each other (Q. 56:29). وَ طَلْحٍ مَنْضُودٍ (الواقعة/29)

The verse describes banana trees with very broad leaves and sweet, densely clustered fruit (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:221). Insufficient vegetation to provide shade fails to ensure adequate thermal comfort. This need corresponds to Maslow's first level (physiological). Accordingly, the

need to provide extensive shade canopies using broad-leaved trees is identified.

5.2.4. Gardens and vineyards (Ḥadā'iq wa Aʿnāb)

حَدائِقَ وَ أَعْناباً (النبأ/٣٢) *Gardens and vineyards (Q. 78:32).*

Ḥadā'iq refers to walled gardens with fruit-bearing trees, and *aʿnāb* to grapevines (Tabataba'i 1996, 20:169; al-Ṭabrisī 1993, 10:647). Limited vegetation diversity and monotonous planting reduce visual richness and habitat diversity. This need corresponds to Max-Neef's need for understanding and Maslow's fifth level (self-actualization). Aly et al. (2018) have identified biodiversity and visual richness as factors that help reduce urban stress. Accordingly, the need to promote biodiversity and visual richness in landscape design is identified.

5.2.5. Springs (ʿUyūn)

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقينَ في جَنَّاتٍ وَ عُيُونٍ (الحجر/٤٥)

Indeed the God wary will be amid gardens and springs (Q. 15:45).

ʿUyūn are described as springs that gush forth within the garden and provide water for the trees (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 22:320). The predominance of linear, artificial water features over more naturally distributed water sources may reduce landscape richness and the sense of vitality. This need corresponds to Max-Neef's needs for understanding and creation and Maslow's fifth level (self-actualization). Accordingly, the need to design distributed water features, including bubbling springs, rather than relying exclusively on linear channels is identified.

Table 2. Interpretation of Natural and Vegetative Elements of the Landscape

Qur'anic Concept	Key Exegetical Meaning	Landscape Concept	Human Need
Ẓill (shade) Q. 56:30; 4:57; 76:14	Extensive, enduring, and dense shade	Sustainability and continuity of thermal comfort	The need for enduring shade and climate control in open spaces
Sidr makhḍūd (lote trees without thorns) Q. 56:28	Lush lote trees with dense shade and free of thorns	Elimination of irritants and replacement with benefit	Removal of barriers and hazards in landscape design (safety)
Ṭalḥ manḍūd (Banana trees bearing densely clustered fruit) Q. 56:29	Banana Trees with broad leaves and fruit arranged in dense clusters	Maximum coverage and shade with minimal enclosure	Design of maximum shade canopies with broad-leaved trees
Ḥadāʾiq wa-aʿnāb (gardens and grapevines) Q. 78:32	Walled Gardens and grapevines, indicating cultivated vegetation and fruit-bearing trees	Vegetative diversity and visual-ecological density	Biodiversity and visual richness in landscape design
ʿUyūn (springs) Q. 77:41; 15:45	Springs gushing forth from within the garden, continuously watering the trees	Dispersed and living water sources (not merely linear)	Design of dispersed water features and bubbling springs rather than merely linear channels

5.3. Edible Elements of the Landscape (Productive Landscape)

This category includes four concepts: *fākihah* (fruit), *quṭūf* (clusters), *māʾ* (water), and *rizq* (provision) (Table 3).

5.3.1. Fruit (fākihah)

وَ فاكِهَةٍ كَثيرَةٍ * لا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَ لا مَمْنُوعَةٍ (الواقعة/٣٢-٣٣)

and abundant fruits, neither inaccessible, nor forbidden (Q. 56:32-33)

These verses indicate that there are abundant fruits (*fākihah kathīrah*) that are never-ending (*lā maqṭūʿah*) and unrestricted (*lā mamnūʿah*) in paradise (al-Ṭabrisī 1993, 9:330). There are two kinds (*zawjān*) of each fruit, providing variety, and the inhabitants of Paradise are protected from any harm associated with them (Tabataba'i 1996, 19:109; 18:150). Scarcity, seasonality, and inequality in access to fruit in this world lead to food

insecurity and malnutrition. This need corresponds to Maslow's first level (physiological needs) and Max-Neef's need for subsistence. Accordingly, the need to ensure food security, nutritional diversity, and easy access to fruit in public spaces is identified.

5.3.2. Clusters (quṭūf)

فِي جَنَّةٍ عالِيَةٍ * قُطُوفُها دانِيَةٌ (الحاقة/٢٢-٢٣)

In an elevated garden, whose clusters [of fruits] will be within easy reach (Q. 69:22-23).

There are fruits near, accessible and readily available (*dāniyah*) in paradise (Tabataba'i 1996, 20:129). Physical, economic, or social barriers to accessing fruit undermine equitable access to the benefits of the productive landscape. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety needs) and Max-Neef's need for participation. Accordingly, the need for participatory and universally accessible landscape design is identified.

5.3.3. Water (māʾ)

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فيها أَنْهارٌ مِنْ ماءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ ... (محمد/١٥)

A description of the paradise promised to the God wary: therein are streams of unstaling water… (Q. 47:15).

Water is described as rivers of water whose taste and smell do not change (*anhār min māʾ ghayr āsin*) and as flowing water (*māʾ maskūb*) (Q. 56:31), suggesting a continuous and abundant water supply (Tabataba'i 1996, 18:233; Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:222). Pollution and poor water quality in this world compromise health and the quality of the landscape experience. This need corresponds to Maslow's first level (physiological needs) and Max-Neef's need for protection. Accordingly, the need to provide clean water and incorporate waterfalls as soothing landscape elements is identified.

5.3.4. Provision (rizq)

أُولئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا لَهُمْ دَرَجاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَ رِزْقٌ كَريمٌ (الأنفال/٤)

It is they who are truly the faithful. They shall have ranks near their Lord, forgiveness and a noble provision (Q. 8:4).

The verse indicates abundant, continuous, and lasting provision without deficiency (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 7:89). The interruption or poor quality of environmental services diminishes public trust and undermines their sustainable benefits. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety needs and continuity) and Max-Neef's need for subsistence. Pickett (2002) emphasizes the continuity and sustainability of services in open spaces. Accordingly, the need to provide sustainable, high-quality services in public green spaces is identified.

Table 3. Interpretation of Edible Elements of the Landscape

Qur'anic Concept	Key Exegetical Meaning	Landscape Concept	Human Need
Fākihah (fruit) Q. 56:32-33; 55:52	Abundant fruits (*kathīrah*), never-ending (*lā maqṭūʾah*), not forbidden (*lā mamnūʾah*); two kinds (*zawjān*) of each fruit; safe from harm	Diversity, continuity, safety, and equitable access to food	Food security, nutritional diversity, and easy access to fruit in public spaces
Quṭūf (clusters) Q. 69:23; 76:14	Near and accessible fruits (*dāniyah*); subjugated and under human command	Removal of access barriers (physical, social, economic)	Participatory and universally accessible landscape design
Mā' (water) Q. 47:15; 56:31	Water that does not change in odor or taste (*ghayr āsin*); continuous, cascading, poured water (*maskūb*)	Water quality and waterfall aesthetics	Provision of clean water and use of waterfalls as a soothing element in the landscape
Rizq (provision) Q. 8:4; 37:41)	Great, continuous, and perpetual bounties without deficiency or flaw	Continuity and perfection of environmental services	Sustainable and high-quality services in public green spaces

5.4. Furnishings and Landscape Amenities

This category includes three terms: *surur* (couches), *khiyām* (pavilions), and *rafraf wa ʿabqarī* (fine carpets and splendid furnishings) (Table 4).

5.4.1. Couches (surur)

عَلى سُرُرٍ مَوْضُونَةٍ * مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْها مُتَقابِلِينَ (الواقعة/١٥-١٦)

On brocaded couches, reclining on them, face to face (Q. 56:15-16).

Couches are described through four attributes: arranged in rows alongside one another (*maṣfūfah*) (Q. 52:20), firmly woven (*mawḍūnah*) (Q. 56:15), elevated (*marfūʿah*) (Q. 88:13), and facing one another

(*mutaqābilīn*) (Q. 56:16) (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 22:427; Tabataba'i 1996, 16:121). The dispersal of urban furniture in ways that do not facilitate face-to-face interaction and engagement can deprive people of opportunities for companionship. This need corresponds to Maslow's third level (social belonging) and Max-Neef's needs for participation and affection. Aly et al. (2018) consider socially oriented furniture design a key factor in enhancing social interactions. Accordingly, the need to design socially oriented urban furniture that facilitates face-to-face interaction and group activities, while also reflecting dignity through elevation and quality, is identified.

5.4.2. Pavilions (khiyām)

حُورٌ مَقْصُوراتٌ فِي الْخِيامِ (الرحمن/٧٢)

Houris secluded in pavilions (Q. 55:72).

The verse implies spacious and beautiful pavilions, which may be wooden or circular structures (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:183-184). The absence of semi-private areas in public spaces complicates family presence and the maintenance of privacy. This need corresponds to Maslow's third level (family belonging) and Max-Neef's need for affection. Pickett (2002) emphasizes the importance of semi-private spaces for maintaining family privacy. Accordingly, the need to provide gazebos, shade structures, and semi-enclosed spaces for families in parks is identified.

5.4.3. Fine carpets and splendid furnishings (rafraf wa ʿabqarī)

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلى رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَ عَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسانٍ (الرحمن/٧۶)

Reclining on green cushions and lovely carpets (Q. 55:76).

Rafraf refers to elevated, lofty carpets, and *ʿabqarī* to small cushions made of fine silk and brocade (Gunābādī 1993, 4:136). The poor quality and rapid deterioration of urban furniture diminish the sense of dignity and enjoyment of public spaces. This need corresponds to Maslow's fourth level (esteem needs) and Max-Neef's need for identity. Aly et al. (2018) identify the quality of materials and furnishings as a factor that can enhance human dignity. Accordingly, the need to use high-quality, durable materials for urban furniture is identified.

Table 4. Interpretation of Furnishings and Landscape Amenities

Qur'anic Concept	Key Exegetical Meaning	Landscape Concept	Human Need
Surur (couches) Q. 52:20; 56:15; 15:47	Arranged in rows (*maṣfūfah*), firmly and densely woven (*mawḍūnah*), elevated (*marfūʾah*), facing one another (*mutaqābilīn*)	Furniture arrangement for social interaction and landscape overlooking	Design of social-oriented urban furniture (face-to-face, group-oriented) with attention to dignity (elevation, quality)
Khiyām (pavilions) Q. 55:72	Spacious and beautiful pavilions; not necessarily fabric; wooden or circular structures	Semi-private and family space with a sense of security	Design of gazebos, shade structures, and semi-enclosed spaces for families in parks
Rafraf wa ʿabqarī (fine carpets and splendid furnishings) Q. 55:76	*Rafraf*: elevated, lofty carpets; *ʿabqarī*: small cushions of fine brocade and pure silk	Supreme quality and dignity-enhancing materials and furnishings	Use of high-quality and durable materials in urban furniture

5.5. Social and Spiritual Dimensions of the Landscape

The fifth category addresses the non-physical dimensions of the landscape of Paradise. It includes four terms: *salām* (peace), *wildān mukhalladūn* (eternal youths), *rawḥ wa rayḥān* (comfort and fragrance), and *jannah* (garden) (Table 5).

5.5.1. Peace (salām)

وَ أُدْخِلَ الَّذينَ آمَنُوا وَ عَمِلُوا الصَّـالِحاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْري مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهارُ خالِدينَ فيها بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فيها سَلامٌ (إبراهيم/٢٣)

Those who have faith and do righteous deeds will be admitted into gardens with streams running in them, to remain in them [forever], by the leave of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be "Peace!" (Q. 14:23).

Salām is a term closely related in meaning to security and a comprehensive designation encompassing all forms of good (al-Ṭabrisī 1993, 6:805). It signifies an environment of safety, serenity, peace, and tranquility (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 13:106). When public spaces are affected by noise, visual disorder, and insecurity, the psychological well-being and sense of security of citizens are threatened. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety needs) and Max-Neef's need for protection. Aly et al. (2018) identify safety and psychological peace as fundamental components of landscape design. Accordingly, the need to

design spaces that minimize noise, visual, and psychological pollution while fostering a sense of security is identified.

5.5.2. Eternal youths (wildān mukhalladūn)

يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدانٌ مُخَلَّدُونَ (الواقعة/١٧)

They will be waited upon by immortal youths (Q. 56:17).

Wildān mukhalladūn refers to immortal youths who circulate among the righteous and serve them with enduring vitality (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 25:368). When the provision of services and the maintenance of public green spaces are intermittent and disorganized, the long-term enjoyment of the landscape is diminished. This need corresponds to Maslow's second level (safety needs and continuity) and Max-Neef's need for subsistence. Accordingly, the need to ensure continuous, high-quality services and maintenance in public green spaces is identified.

5.5.3. Comfort and fragrance (rawḥ wa rayḥān)

فَرَوْحٌ وَ رَيْحانٌ وَ جَنَّةُ نَعيمٍ (الواقعه/٨٩)

Then ease, abundance, and a garden of bliss (Q. 56:89).

Rawḥ refers to relief from adversity, while *rayḥān* refers to the enjoyment of blessings following the removal of distress (Makarem Shirazi 1995, 23:283). When urban landscapes fail to relieve the stresses of daily life, psychological well-being is diminished. This need corresponds to Maslow's third level (belonging and tranquility) and Max-Neef's need for leisure. Aly et al. (2018) consider stress relief one of the essential functions of natural landscapes. Accordingly, the need to design landscapes that promote stress reduction through calm environments away from noise and commotion is identified.

5.5.4. Garden (jannah)

أَمَّا الَّذينَ آمَنُوا وَ عَمِلُوا الصَّالِحاتِ فَلَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْمَأْوى نُزُلاً بِما كانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (السجدة/١٩)

As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, for them are gardens of the Abode a hospitality for what they used to do (Q. 32:19).

The term *jannah* signifies a garden covered with trees and is associated with eternity, imperishability, and a permanent dwelling place (al-Rāghib

al-Iṣfahānī 1992, 1:204; Tabataba'i 1996, 15:189). When urban landscapes are temporary, unstable, and devoid of a sense of belonging, people may be unable to regard their environment as home. This need corresponds to Maslow's fifth level (self-actualization and meaning) and Max-Neef's need for identity. Pickett (2002) emphasizes the sense of belonging and place identity as factors contributing to residents' psychological stability. Accordingly, the need to design landscapes that function as a second home and foster a sense of belonging and permanence is identified.

Table 5. Interpretation of Social and Spiritual Dimensions of the Landscape

Qur'anic Concept	Key Exegetical Meaning	Landscape Concept	Human Need
Salām (peace) Q. 19:62; 13:24; 14:23	Closely related in meaning to *amn* (security); a comprehensive name including every good; signifying a safe environment filled with serenity and tranquility	Psychological security and tranquillity as the qualitative infrastructure of the landscape	Design of spaces free from noise, visual, and psychological pollution; creating a sense of security
Wildān mukhalladūn (eternal youths) Q. 56:17; 76:19	Immortal children who circulate around the righteous; servants with eternal vitality	Sustainable and high-quality services in the landscape	Provision of continuous and high-quality services and maintenance in public green spaces
Rawḥ wa rayḥān (comfort and fragrance) Q. 56:89	*Rawḥ*: relief from adversities; *rayḥān*: enjoyment of bounties following the removal of stress	Design for stress relief and subsequent tranquillity	Design of landscapes with stress-relief capacity (calm environments, away from noise and commotion)
Jannah (garden) Q. 2:25; 18:107; 32:19	A garden covered with trees; eternal, imperishable; the permanent dwelling of humanity	Dignity and permanence of dwelling	Design of the landscape as humanity's second home with a sense of belonging and permanence

6. Design Principles Based on Human Needs

Following the interpretation of the terms and the identification of human needs, a design principle is derived from each need using the three-stage model. The design principles proposed in this research are normative; that is, they prescribe what ought to be done. They serve as general strategies for addressing enduring human needs in the contemporary world. Each principle is accompanied by its supporting Qur'anic verse and source term.

6.1. Principle One: Landscape Sustainability

The first design principle concerns sustainability-oriented planning and design, including the protection of green–blue infrastructure, the selection of native and resilient species, design that accommodates natural cycles, and the continuity of landscape services, including maintenance, cleanliness, and security. Through the expression *khālidīna fīhā* (abiding therein forever) (Q. 2:25), the Qur'an emphasizes eternity and continuity, which are translated in this study into the principles of sustainability and resource preservation for future generations. *Wildān mukhalladūn* (eternal youths) (Q. 56:17) is also interpreted here as symbolizing continuity and vitality in the provision of landscape services.

The human needs underlying this principle include sustainable, high-quality services in public green spaces and a sense of belonging and permanence. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the second level (safety) and the fifth level (self-actualization).

6.2. Principle Two: Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape

The second design principle involves the hierarchical planning of open and green spaces, together with the creation of continuity among natural elements. *Ẓill mamdūd* (extended shade) (Q. 56:30) indicates extended, uninterrupted shade, while *ʿarḍuhā ka-ʿarḍi al-samāʾi wa-al-arḍ* (its breadth is like the breadth of the heavens and the earth) (Q. 57:21) signifies vastness on an immense scale. This principle calls for a continuous network of green spaces extending from the local to the extra-urban scale, together with continuity of shade and water (Q. 57:21) across the landscape. Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) identify extent as one of the principal characteristics of restorative environments.

The human needs underlying this principle include access to extensive open spaces and green–blue infrastructure, thermal comfort, and extensive shade coverage. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the first and second levels (physiological and safety needs).

6.3. Principle Three: Health Promotion (Productive Landscape)

The third design principle involves designing landscapes with edible

plant species that are readily accessible. The three Qur'anic components, *wa fākihatin kathīratin, lā maqṭūʿatin wa-lā mamnūʿah* (abundant fruit, neither interrupted nor forbidden) (Q. 56:32–33), and *quṭūfuhā dāniyah* (its clusters are near at hand and accessible) (Q. 69:23), are central to the design of productive landscapes. *Anhārun min māʾin ghayri āsin* (rivers of water whose taste and smell do not change) (Q. 47:15) also emphasizes water quality and health, a connection that this study translates into the provision of clean water and the use of waterfalls as soothing landscape elements.

The human needs underlying this principle include food security, nutritional diversity, easy access to fruit in public spaces, and clean water. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the first level (physiological needs).

6.4. Principle Four: Comfort-Oriented Design

The fourth design principle involves designing tranquil spaces that minimize environmental disturbances and pollution, with particular emphasis on shade and water. *Lā yasmaʿūna fīhā laghwan illā salāmā* (they will not hear therein any vain talk, but only peace) (Q. 19:62) indicates the absence of vain or disturbing speech, while *salām* signifies peace and tranquility. *Māʾ maskūb* (poured water) (Q. 56:31) and *ẓill ẓalīl* (abundant shade) (Q. 4:57) are interpreted here as elements that can promote tranquility in the landscape of Paradise. This principle calls for the creation of "tranquility sanctuaries" in cities. Kaplan and Kaplan's theory (1989) and Ulrich's research (1984) provide support for the stress-reducing potential of natural environments.

The human needs underlying this principle include dignified entrances, spaces free from noise and visual pollution, stress relief, and thermal comfort. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the second level (safety needs) and the third level (belonging and tranquility).

6.5. Principle Five: Social Cohesion

The fifth design principle involves designing landscape furnishings and communal spaces that encourage social interaction. The four attributes of the couches in descriptions of Paradise—*maṣfūfah* (arranged in rows) (Q. 52:20), *mawḍūnah* (firmly woven) (Q. 56:15), *marfūʿah* (elevated) (Q. 88:13), and *mutaqābilīn* (facing one another) (Q. 15:47)—are interpreted in this study as suggesting arrangements that facilitate social interaction and views of the surrounding landscape. This principle calls for arranging

furniture to enable face-to-face interaction through group benches, opposing seating areas, and gathering spaces with adequate capacity. Whyte (1980) and Gehl (2011) emphasize the role of seating arrangements and public-space design in fostering social interaction.

The human needs underlying this principle include access to socially oriented urban furniture that facilitates face-to-face interaction and group activities, as well as opportunities for social interaction. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the third level (belonging and social interaction).

6.6. Principle Six: Qualitative Excellence and Human Dignity

The sixth design principle involves the use of high-quality materials and the adoption of a human-dignity-oriented approach to design. The Qur'anic description of the inhabitants as honored and the expression *ghurafun min fawqihā ghuraf* (chambers above chambers) (Q. 39:20) are interpreted here as suggesting elevation and views over the surrounding landscape. *ʿAlā rafrafin khuḍrin wa-ʿabqariyyin ḥisān* (on green carpets and splendid furnishings) (Q. 55:76) emphasizes the quality and dignity-enhancing potential of furnishings. *Sidr makhḍūd* (Q. 56:28) is interpreted as suggesting the removal of irritating or undesirable elements. This principle calls for using durable, aesthetically pleasing materials in urban furniture, designing spaces with views over the landscape, and removing barriers. Soja (2010) emphasizes the equitable distribution of spatial opportunities.

The human needs underlying this principle include access to suitable views, protection from hazards, and the use of high-quality materials in urban furniture. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the fourth level (esteem and dignity).

6.7. Principle Seven: Family Cohesion

The seventh design principle involves designing semi-private spaces and family-oriented areas within public landscapes. *Yadkhulūnahā wa-man ṣalaḥa min ābāʾihim wa-azwājihim wa-dhurriyyātihim* (they will enter it, along with the righteous among their fathers, their spouses, and their descendants) (Q. 13:23) describes the entry of family members into Paradise, an image that this study translates into the design of family-oriented communal spaces, such as gazebos, shade structures, and enclosed seating platforms, as well as safe pathways for children. *Ḥūrun maqṣūrātun fī al-khiyām* (maidens secluded in pavilions) (Q. 55:72) is interpreted as

emphasizing the importance of private spaces within the broader social environment. Madanipour (2003) discusses the role of privacy and the relationship between public and private space in urban environments.

The human needs underlying this principle include opportunities for family presence, the preservation of privacy, and psychological security. In Maslow's theory, these needs correspond to the third level (belonging and family relationships).

The alignment of the seven principles with Maslow's and Max-Neef's theories suggests that the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise can be interpreted as reflecting humanity's innate and enduring needs in this world. Table 6 presents the complete derivation process, from Qur'anic term to design principle. For each of the 5 categories, it identifies the source Qur'anic term and supporting verse, the corresponding level in Maslow's theory, the corresponding need in Max-Neef's theory, and the associated design principle. For example, first-level needs in Maslow's theory (physiological needs), such as thermal comfort (derived from *ẓill*) and food security (derived from *fākihah*), are linked to the principles of Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape and Health Promotion, respectively. Third-level needs (belonging) are linked to the principles of Social Cohesion (derived from *surur*) and Family Cohesion (derived from *khiyām* and *bāb*). Fourth- and fifth-level needs (esteem and self-actualization) are linked to the principles of Qualitative Excellence and Human Dignity (derived from *ghurfah* and *rafraf*) and Landscape Sustainability (derived from *jannah*).

Table 6. Summary of Qur'anic Concepts, Human Needs and Extracted Landscape Design Principles

Category	Qur'anic Concept	Extracted Human Need	Maslow's Level	Max-Neef's Need	Related Design Principle
Infrastructural and Spatial Elements	*Nahr* (river) Q. 2:25; 47:15	Access to extensive open spaces and sustainable green-blue infrastructure	Level 2 (Safety and Security)	Protection	Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape
	Ghurfah (chamber) Q. 39:20; 29:58	The right to a suitable view and desirable air quality	Level 4 (Esteem and Dignity)	Identity	Qualitative Excellence and Human Dignity
	ʿArḍ (breadth) Q. 57:21	The need for open and green spaces at various scales (from neighborhood to extra-urban)	Level 2 (Safety and Security)	Freedom	Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape
	Bāb (gate) Q. 13:23; 39:73	Design of dignified entrances, provision of psychological security, and enabling family presence	Levels 2 & 3 (Safety and Belonging)	Protection, Affection	Comfort-Orientation-Family Cohesion

Category	Qur'anic Concept	Extracted Human Need	Maslow's Level	Max-Neef's Need	Related Design Principle
Natural and Vegetative Elements	*Ẓill* (shade) Q. 56:30; 4:57; 76:14	The need for enduring shade and climate control in open spaces	Level 1 (Physiological Needs)	Leisure	Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape -Comfort-Orientation
	Sidr makḥḍūd (lote-trees) Q. 56:28	Removal of barriers and hazards in landscape design (safety)	Level 2 (Safety and Security)	Protection	Health-Promotion
	Ṭalḥ manḍūd (banana trees) Q. 56:29	Design of maximum shade canopies with broad-leaved trees	Level 1 (Physiological Needs)	Leisure	Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape
	Ḥadā'iq wa aʿnāb (gardens & vineyards) Q. 78:32	Biodiversity and visual richness in landscape design	Level 5 (Self-Actualization)	Understanding	Sustainability – Health-Promotion
	ʿUyūn (springs) Q. 77:41; 15:45	Design of dispersed water features and bubbling springs rather than merely linear channels	Level 5 (Self-Actualization)	Creation	Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape
Edible Elements	*Fākihah* (fruit) Q. 56:32-33; 55:52	Food security, nutritional diversity, and easy access to fruit in public spaces	Level 1 (Physiological Needs)	Subsistence	Health-Promotion (Productive Landscape)
	Quṭūf (clusters) Q. 69:23; 76:14	Participatory and universally accessible landscape design	Level 2 (Safety and Security)	Participation	Health-Promotion
	Mā' (water) Q. 47:15; 56:31	Provision of clean water and use of waterfalls as a soothing element in the landscape	Level 1 (Physiological Needs)	Protection	Comfort-Orientation
	Rizq (provision) Q. 8:4; 37:41	Sustainable and high-quality services in public green spaces	Level 2 (Safety and Continuity)	Subsistence	Sustainability
Furnishings and Environmental Amenities	*Surur* (couches) Q. 52:20; 56:15; 15:47	Design of social-oriented urban furniture (face-to-face, group-oriented) with attention to dignity	Level 3 (Belonging and Social Interaction)	Participation, Affection	Social Cohesion – Qualitative Excellence
	Khiyām (pavilions) Q. 55:72	Design of gazebos, shade structures, and semi-enclosed spaces for families in parks	Level 3 (Family Belonging)	Affection	Family Cohesion
	Rafraf wa ʿabqarī (fine carpets) Q. 55:76	Use of high-quality and durable materials in urban furniture	Level 4 (Esteem and Dignity)	Identity	Qualitative Excellence and Human Dignity
Social and Spiritual Dimensions	*Salām* (peace) Q. 19:62; 13:24; 14:23	Design of spaces free from noise, visual, and psychological pollution; creating a sense of security	Level 2 (Safety and Security)	Protection	Comfort-Orientation
	Wildān mukhalladūn (eternal youths) Q. 56:17; 76:19	Provision of continuous and high-quality services and maintenance in public green spaces	Level 2 (Safety and Continuity)	Subsistence	Sustainability
	Rawḥ wa rayḥān (comfort & fragrance) Q. 56:89	Design of landscapes with stress-relief capacity (calm environments, away from noise and commotion)	Level 3 (Belonging & Tranquility)	Leisure	Comfort-Orientation
	Jannah (garden) Q. 2:25; 18:107; 32:19	Design of the landscape as humanity's "second home" with a sense of belonging and permanence	Level 5 (Self-Actualization and Meaning)	Identity	Sustainability – Qualitative Excellence

7. Discussion

The findings of this research, organized into five categories of environmental characteristics, infrastructural, natural, edible, furnishings and amenities, and socio-spiritual dimensions, demonstrate that the Qur'anic depiction of Paradise encompasses dimensions far beyond water, trees, and shade. This fivefold categorization suggests that the Qur'an depicts Paradise not merely as a garden but as a complete living environment in which spatial infrastructure, natural elements, food resources, quality furnishings, and socio-spiritual relationships jointly and interactively constitute an ideal lifeworld. This raises a central question: how can this idealized depiction inform landscape design?

The three-stage model of verse → concept → human need → design principle, developed in this research through directed content analysis and the inversion technique of needs, demonstrates how Qur'anic descriptions can be interpreted in relation to human needs and compared with contemporary environmental psychology theories. For instance, extended shade addresses the need for thermal comfort; abundant fruit that is neither interrupted nor forbidden addresses the need for food security; and couches facing one another address the need for social interaction. These alignments, examined in relation to the theories of Maslow (1943), Max-Neef (1991), and Kaplan (1995), suggest that the Qur'anic descriptions of Paradise articulate needs that are also addressed in contemporary psychological theories. Concepts such as extended shade, soothing waterfalls, and freedom from vain talk in the Qur'an can be compared with concepts discussed by Kaplan (1995) and Ulrich (1984), including the extent of restorative environments, being away, and the restorative effects of nature.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of this research lies in the comparison between the seven extracted principles and established theories of landscape architecture. Several notable areas of overlap emerge: Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape aligns with Forman's urban green network theory (Forman 2014) and Corner's conception of landscape as process (Corner 2006); Health Promotion aligns with productive landscape theory (Viljoen 2005; Hou et al. 2009); Comfort-Oriented Design aligns with Kaplan's attention restoration theory (Kaplan 1995); Social Cohesion aligns with the work of Whyte (1980) and Gehl (2011); and Qualitative Excellence and Human Dignity aligns with Soja's spatial justice theory (Soja 2010). These overlaps suggest that, functionally, the Qur'anic principles are consistent with several contemporary theories.

However, this study identifies three features that distinguish its Qur'anic

approach from secular frameworks. First, the sacred text serves as the ultimate authority, providing the principles with a normative and metaphysical foundation (Andriawan 2025). Second, the approach encompasses physical, social, spiritual, and ethical dimensions simultaneously (Clark 2010). Third, its purpose extends beyond well-being or sustainability to include gratitude, reflection, and nearness to God (Tabataba'i 1996, 7: 380). In other words, a secular approach may evaluate a good landscape in terms of its capacity to meet biological, social, and psychological needs, whereas the Qur'anic approach, as developed in this study, also understands the landscape as a means of reminding people of the source of blessings and inviting gratitude and reflection.

Among these principles, Family Cohesion reveals the distinctiveness of the Qur'anic approach more clearly than any other. In secular landscape architecture theories, this principle is not generally treated as an independent one, and public spaces are often designed primarily for individuals rather than families (Madanipour 2003). By contrast, the Qur'an, in verses such as *"the Gardens of Eden, which they will enter along with whoever is righteous from among their forebears, their spouses, and their descendants, and the angels will call on them from every door"* (Q. 13:23) and *"maidens secluded in pavilions"* (Q. 55:72), presents images that this study interprets in terms of family togetherness, privacy, and dignified entry. This principle could offer insights into addressing the limited accommodation of family needs in contemporary urban spaces and represents a potentially underexplored dimension of conventional landscape design knowledge, one that the Qur'anic approach proposes as an independent normative principle. Moreover, the Qur'anic expressions *lā maqṭūʿah* (uninterrupted), *lā mamnūʿah* (unforbidden), and *dāniyah* (near at hand) within the Health Promotion principle highlight dimensions of the productive landscape that may receive less explicit attention in conventional approaches.

Nevertheless, this research has several limitations. Reliance on seven exegetical sources, despite their methodological diversity, may have influenced the findings through the selection of interpreters. Furthermore, the absence of practical application of the principles in an actual design project means that their applicability and effectiveness remain to be validated through mixed-methods research in a real-world design setting. A further significant limitation is the derivation of principles for this world from eschatological verses describing Paradise, which raises the concern that two distinct realms may be conflated. This concern has been addressed in the theoretical foundations by distinguishing between the reality of Paradise and the paradisiacal model. Despite these limitations, the study's

methodological rigor is supported in three ways: the use of seven exegetical sources representing diverse approaches; the documentation of the inferential pathway from verse to principle in Table 6; and the comparison of the identified needs with foundational sources in environmental psychology and landscape architecture. These comparisons provide a rationale for treating the identified needs as relevant to established scholarship rather than as assumptions introduced solely by the researchers. Thus, the study offers not merely an abstract theory but a framework that engages with existing knowledge, connects Qur'anic interpretation with human needs, and draws inspiration from a sacred text to open new possibilities for landscape design.

8. Conclusion

This research sought to answer the central question of whether principles and criteria for contemporary landscape architecture can be derived from the Qur'anic descriptions of eschatological Paradise. The findings suggest that this is possible, provided that a distinction is maintained between the reality of Paradise, an eschatological reality inaccessible to human experience, and the paradisiacal model, understood as the set of principles and values that may be inferred from its descriptions. Accordingly, seven landscape design principles were derived: Landscape Sustainability; Expansiveness and Continuity of the Landscape; Health Promotion (Productive Landscape); Comfort-Oriented Design; Social Cohesion; Qualitative Excellence and Human Dignity; and Family Cohesion. The proposed framework offers a distinctive perspective in three respects: its normative grounding in the Qur'an, its integration of physical, natural, edible, furnishing, social, spiritual, and ethical dimensions, and its spiritual orientation toward gratitude, reflection, and nearness to God.

The three-stage model of "verse → concept → human need → design principle," developed using the inversion technique, offers a methodological framework for deriving design principles from religious texts and may be adapted for similar studies. The seven principles may inform four areas of practice: evaluating existing urban open spaces, guiding the design of new landscapes, revising the management of historical gardens, and formulating a charter for Islamic landscape design. However, their practical applicability and effectiveness require further validation.

Future research could use a multidisciplinary expert panel and the Delphi method to assess and prioritize the principles, followed by pilot applications in urban green-space projects and mixed-methods evaluations of their

outcomes. Further studies could also examine a broader range of exegetical sources, analyze Qur'anic verses concerning the natural world, such as Q. 6:99, to identify complementary principles, and develop a framework grounded in Islamic philosophy of landscape architecture through engagement with the perspectives of Muslim scholars.

As a book of guidance, the Qur'an presents a vision of the desirable life in which people experience security, health, dignity, and solidarity with their families and communities within sustainable and tranquil landscapes. By distinguishing the eschatological reality of Paradise from the paradisiacal model inferred from its descriptions, this study proposes a way to explore the relevance of Qur'anic imagery to contemporary landscape design without treating the descriptions as an executable design blueprint. It is hoped that these principles will encourage further research and inform the creation of landscapes that foster gratitude (*shukr*), reflection (*tafakkur*), and the good life (*ḥayāt ṭayyibah*).

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