All commentators agree that *al-Ṭūr* is from the Makkan period, most likely from the latter half. According to some it was revealed immediately after *Sūrah 32, al-Sajdah*. It takes its name from the mention of *the Mount* (*al-Ṭūr*) in the first verse. *Al-Ṭūr* is understood by most as a reference to Mt. Sinai here and wherever else it is found in the Quran (2:63, 93; 19:52; 20:80; 28:29, 46), although the full name “Mount Sinai” is given twice (*Ṭūr Sīnā* in 23:20 and *al-Ṭūr al-Sīnīn* in 95:2). It follows upon the previous *sūrah* in that the first half (vv. 1–28) focuses upon the subject of the concluding verse of that *sūrah, the Day that they are promised* (51:60; Aj, Āl), and in that it promises punishment for the wrongdoers and disbelievers mentioned in 51:59–60 (R). This *sūrah* can thus be understood as an affirmation of the promise made in *Sūrah 51* (see 51:5, 22) and as a further warning thereof (Bq).

*Al-Ṭūr* begins with a series of oaths and a promise of God’s impending punishment and the Day of Judgment (vv. 1–10), followed by a description of what will befall the *deniers* (vv. 11–16), whose fate is then contrasted to the rewards bestowed upon the *reverent* (vv. 17–28). This is followed by a reply to accusations made regarding the Prophet (vv. 29–31) and a series of challenges to those who deny him and the revelation (vv. 32–43). The *sūrah* then concludes with counsel to turn away from disputing with the disbelievers, to be patient, and to praise God (vv. 44–49).
In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

1 By the Mount, 2 and by a Book inscribed 3 on parchment outspread; 4 by the house inhabited, 5 by the canopy raised, 6 and by the sea swelling over, 7 truly thy Lord’s Punishment shall come to pass. 8 None can avert it. 9 On a day when the sky churns with [great] churning, 10 and the mountains move with [great] motion; 11 woe that Day to the deniers 12 who play in idle talk, 13 a day when they are thrust violently into the Fire of Hell: 14 “This is the Fire that you used to deny. 15 Is this sorcery, or do you not see? 16 Burn therein! Be patient, or be not patient; it will be the same for you. You are only requited for that which you used to do.” 17 Truly the reverent shall be in Gardens and bliss, 18 rejoicing in what their Lord has given them. And their Lord has shielded them from the punishment of Hellfire: 19 “Eat and drink in enjoyment for that which you used to do,” 20 reclining upon couches arrayed, and We shall wed them to wide-eyed maidens. 21 And those who believe and whose progeny followed them in faith, We shall cause their progeny to join them and will not stint aught of their deeds. Each man shall be held in pledge for that which he has earned. 22 And We shall bestow upon them fruits and meat as they desire. 23 Therein they shall pass to one another a cup wherein is no idle talk, nor incitement to sin, 24 and there wait upon them youths, for them, as if they were hidden pearls. 25 And they will turn to one another, questioning each other, 26 saying, “Truly aforetime, when among our families, we
were anxious, but God was gracious unto us and shielded us from the punishment of the scorching wind. Truly we did call upon Him aforetime. Truly He is the Righteous, the Merciful.” So remind, for thou art not, by the Blessing of thy Lord, a soothsayer or one possessed. Or do they say, “A poet—let us await the vagaries of fate for him.” Say, “Wait! For truly I am waiting along with you.” Do their minds command them to this, or are they a rebellious people? Or do they say, “He has invented it”? Nay, but they believe not. Then let them bring an account like unto it, if they are truthful. Were they created from naught? Or are they the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no certainty. Do they possess the treasuries of your Lord? Or are they in control? Or do they have a ladder whereby they listen? Then let their listener bring a clear warrant. Does He have daughters while you have sons? Or dost thou ask a reward of them, such that they are burdened with debt? Or do they possess the Unseen, such that they write it down? Or do they desire to devise [a scheme]? Then those who disbelieve shall be the ones against whom a scheme is devised! Or do they have a god other than God? Glory be to God above the partners they ascribe. Were they to see a fragment falling from the sky, they would say, “A heap of clouds.” So leave them until they meet the Day when they will be thunderstruck, a day when their scheming will avail them naught and they will not be helped. And truly for those who do wrong there is punishment besides that. But
most of them know not. **48** Be patient with the judgment of thy Lord, for thou art before Our eyes; hymn the praise of thy Lord when thou dost rise; **49** and at night glorify Him, and at the receding of the stars.

**Commentary**

1 **By the Mount,**

1 *The Mount* is a reference to Mt. Sinai and by extension to what was revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai (Bq). It can also be seen as a general reference to all mountains (Bq, R).

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2 **and by a Book inscribed**

3 **on parchment outspread;**

2–3 These verses may refer to the Torah, the Quran (Bḍ, JJ, R), or the *Preserved Tablet* (85:22; Bḍ, IK, R), the last of which most interpret to mean the source of all revelations. It could also be seen as a reference to the books in which the deeds of all human beings are recorded (R) or to the knowledge and wisdom written within the hearts of God’s friends (Bḍ).

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4 **by the house inhabited,**

4 The Prophet is reported to have said regarding his Night Journey and Ascension (for which see 17:1; 53:1–14), “I was taken to *the house inhabited*. It is visited every day by seventy thousand angels who will not come back to visit it again” (IK). According to many classical scholars, every heaven has its own house of worship, which is the direction of prayer for its residents. *The house inhabited* is said to be in the third, sixth, or seventh Heaven (JJ); Ibn Kathīr reports that the house located in the lowest heaven is called “the Glorious House” (*al-bayt...*)
al-ʿizzah). Others say the house inhabited can also be understood as a reference to the Kaʿbah or to the heart of the believer and its being “inhabited” by knowledge (Bḍ).

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5 by the canopy raised,

5 The canopy raised is the sky (Bḍ, JJ), as in 21:32: And We made the sky a canopy preserved (IK).

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6 and by the sea swelling over,

6 This verse can be understood as a reference to the sea being full (Bḍ, JJ) or to the seas “boiling over” on the Day of Judgment, as in 81:6: And when the seas are made to swell over (cf. 82:3; Bḍ, IK).

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7 truly thy Lord’s Punishment shall come to pass.

8 None can avert it.

7–8 Cf. 51:6. Shall come to pass can also be translated shall befall (wāqiʿ), for which see 56:1–2c. Here the phrase indicates that the punishment shall come upon all who deserve it (JJ). These verses constitute the response to the oaths taker in vv. 1–7, all of which point to the completeness of God’s Power and Wisdom, which, like His Punishment, none can avert (Bḍ).

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9 On a day when the sky churns with [great] churning,

9 Elsewhere it is said that the sky shall be rent asunder (42:5; 55:37; 73:18; 84:1; also see 25:25; 82:1), and that the sky shall be opened as if it were gates (78:19).
and the mountains move with [great] motion;

10 The mountains move, becoming heaps of shifting sand (73:14), as in 27:88: And thou seest the mountains that thou dost suppose are solid pass away like clouds—the work of God, Who perfects all things. See also 18:47; 69:14; 70:8–9; 78:20; 81:3; 89:21; 101:5.

woe that Day to the deniers

11 This phrase is repeated ten times in Sūrah 77. Here, as there, it refers to those who deny the Day of Judgment (as the same phrase does in 83:10) or those who deny the prophethood of Muhammad.

who play in idle talk,

12 To play in idle talk is often associated with vain discussion (6:68; see 6:68–69c), but it means more generally to become engrossed with the vanities of this world (R). Regarding the meaning of this verse, which has become an idiomatic Arabic expression, see 70:42c; 74:45c. Several Quranic passages indicate a direct connection between denying God and idle talk. This is made more explicit in a ḥadīth: “Whosoever can guarantee me that he will control what is between his two lips and his two thighs, I will guarantee him the Garden.” The Prophet is also reported to have said, “The fornication of the tongue is the enticing word.” And it is reported that when the Prophet instructed the prominent Companion Muḥādh ibn Jabal in the principles of Islam, he took hold of his own tongue and said, “Restrain this.” Muḥādh said, “O Prophet of God, are we to be held accountable for what we say?” He said, “May your mother be bereaved of you Muḥādh! Is there anything that drags people on their faces”—or he said “on their noses”—“into the Fire other than the jests of their tongues?”

a day when they are thrust violently into the Fire of
The violent way the deniers are cast into the Fire is described graphically in many verses: they are *dragged upon their faces* (54:48), they are bound in *shackles and chains* (40:71; see 36:8c; 40:70–72c), and they drink *a boiling liquid and a cold, murky fluid* (38:57), among other forms of punishment. This verse could also be read, “a day when they are called unto the Fire of Hell with a [great] calling” (Bd).

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“This is the Fire that you used to deny.

Cf. 83:17. This verse is similar to 77:29: *Away to that which you used to deny!* Vv. 14–16 are understood to be uttered by the angels to the inhabitants of the Fire.

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Is this sorcery, or do you not see?

This verse asks, “*Is this sorcery, as you used to claim?*” as in 54:2: *And if they see a sign, they turn away and say, “Incessant sorcery!”* And as in 15:15, where it is said that among the responses to the miracles and revelations brought by prophets, people say, *Our eyes are merely spellbound. Nay, we are a people bewitched!* The disbelievers are said to have made this charge against several messengers of God, most notably the prophets Moses and Muhammad (see 5:110; 6:7; 10:2; 11:7; 34:43; 37:15; 43:30; 46:7; 61:6; 74:24).

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Burn therein! Be patient, or be not patient; it will be the same for you. You are only requited for that which you used to do.”

Whereas patience with the trials or punishments in this life can ease the trial, lessen the punishment, and even provide spiritual benefit, in the Hereafter one no longer benefits from exercising this virtue, which should have been exercised
before, and the punishment will not be lessened, regardless of one’s disposition toward it (R). You are only requited for that which you used to do (cf. 27:90; 37:39; 66:7) indicates that everyone receives the punishment that they have brought upon themselves, as in 10:44: Truly God does not wrong human beings in the least, but rather human beings wrong themselves.

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17 Truly the reverent shall be in Gardens and bliss,

17 This is the only verse that presents Gardens and bliss as parallels. Other verses speak of Gardens of bliss (see 5:65; 10:9; 22:56; 31:8; 37:43; 56:12; 68:34).

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18 rejoicing in what their Lord has given them. And their Lord has shielded them from the punishment of Hellfire:

18 Regarding God’s shielding the believers from Hellfire, see 44:56c.

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19 “Eat and drink in enjoyment for that which you used to do,”

19 Cf. 69:24; 77:43. In enjoyment conveys the idea of a gracious host who provides hospitality with no reservations. Here it is understood to mean “while you are enjoying [them],” referring to the eating and drinking, or to mean “as congratulations” for that which you used to do (Bḍ).

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20 reclining upon couches arrayed, and We shall wed them to wide-eyed maidens.

20 Elsewhere couches are described as embroidered couches (56:15) upon
which the reverent recline facing one another (37:44; 44:53; 56:16), in the shade with their spouses (36:56). The word for “couches,” surūr (sing. sarīr), is semantically related to both “joy” (surūr) and “secret” (sirr, pl. asrār). Joy (surūr) is thus described as “rejoicing that remains concealed,” and the couches upon which believers sit can be seen as couches of joy (Iṣ). Thus al-Qushayrī glosses reclining upon couches as “they remain in joy and felicity.” For wide-eyed maidens (cf. 44:54; 55:72; 56:22), see 44:54c.

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21 And those who believe and whose progeny followed them in faith, We shall cause their progeny to join them and will not stint aught of their deeds. Each man shall be held in pledge for that which he has earned.

21 According to a saying attributed by some to the Prophet (Bd, Q) and by others to Ibn ʿAbbās (IK, Ṭ), “God elevates the ranks of the believers’ progeny to the rank of their parents, even when the former have not performed as well as the latter, to comfort the parents thereby.” Then he recited this verse. Join them can mean both that they will be together and that the children will receive a reward equal to that of their parents (Ṭ). Ibn ʿAbbās is also reported to have said, “No part of the reward their parents receive for their good deeds will be reduced for them” (IK), though all such interpretations assume the children are believers as well. Each man shall be held in pledge for that which he has earned (cf. 74:38) indicates that the good and evil deeds that a soul has committed bind it to a particular end, since God attends to every soul in accordance with what it has earned (13:33). The first part of this verse can also be read with progeny as a direct object and with “follow” in the first-person plural (atbaʾnāhum), meaning, “Those who believed and whose progeny We caused to follow in belief,” a reading preferred by several commentators (JJ, Ṭ).

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22 And We shall bestow upon them fruits and meat as they desire.

22 Cf. 56:20–21; 77:42. Several other verses also refer to the fruits of the Garden that will be at the disposal of the believers (e.g., 36:57; 37:42; 38:51;
Therein they shall pass to one another a cup wherein is no idle talk, nor incitement to sin,

Nor incitement to sin (see also 56:25) translates lā taʾthīm, which can also indicate that there is no lying or any form of sinful speech. Both readings indicate that this wine does not bring about the negative effects that might result from the wine of this world (JJ); see also 37:47; 56:19.

and there wait upon them youths, for them, as if they were hidden pearls.

For the youths who wait upon the believers, see 56:17c; 76:19c. For them translates lahum, which could be taken to mean that these are their own children (R).

And they will turn to one another, questioning each other,

Cf. 37:27, 50. This verse refers to the believers speaking with one another about their lives in this world while they are in the Hereafter, in contrast to the disbelievers, of whom the Quran says, There shall be no kinship between them that Day, nor will they question one another (23:101; see also 28:66). Their questioning one another can also refer to the questions they pose about their former companions who did not enter the Garden (see 37:50–55).

saying, “Truly aforetime, when among our families, we were anxious,
but God was gracious unto us and shielded us from the punishment of the scorching wind.

26–27 That they were anxious can be understood to indicate that their questioning one another arises from their humility, as they do not think that they have merited entry into Paradise and are aware that it is only through the Grace of God that they could have achieved such a station. Scorching wind translates samūm, which indicates a wind that penetrates the pores (masām) of one’s body (Aj, Q, Z). It is among the punishments said to afflict the companions of the left in 56:42.

Truly we did call upon Him aforetime. Truly He is the Righteous, the Merciful.”

28 Truly He is translates innahu, which could also be read annahu (Bd), meaning “for He is” (“for He is the Righteous, the Merciful”). This is the only appearance of the Divine Name al-Birr or the Righteous in the Quran. Birr usually appears in the Quran in relation to certain virtuous human beings who are referred to in several passages as al-abrār, or the pious (3:198; 76:5; 82:13; 83:18, 22). In relation to both God and humans, birr connotes beneficence and all the attributes associated with it. It is thus similar to nobility or magnanimity (karāmah; see 49:13c; 96:3c) and to “doing what is beautiful” (iḥsān; see 29:69c), qualities that encompass many other virtues and can be used to describe both God, Who is seen as the source of all virtues, and human beings.

So remind, for thou art not, by the Blessing of thy Lord, a soothsayer or one possessed.

29 The placement of the command to remind between the mention of those who feared God in this world (vv. 25–28) and a series of verses (vv. 30–33) in which the disbelievers cast aspersions upon the Prophet is in keeping with the broader Quranic theme that the Prophet’s function is to deliver the message to those who fear God and to leave the disbelievers for God to deal with, as in 50:45: We know best that which they say. Thine is not to compel them. So remind, by means
of the Quran, those who fear My Threat (see also 87:9–10; 88:21–26). That the Prophet was a soothsayer (cf. 69:42) or possessed (cf. 68:2) are among the many accusations the Makkans made against him, as in 15:6–7; 23:70; 34:8; 68:51.

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Or do they say, “A poet—let us await the vagaries of fate for him.”

30 A poet refers to the Makkans’ accusation that Muhammad had authored the Quran himself; regarding this accusation, see 26:224–27; 29:48; 36:69. The vagaries of fate can also indicate the vagaries of death or the calamities of time (Z). Here the phrase indicates that the disbelievers expected the passage of time to prove the Prophet wrong.

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Say, “Wait! For truly I am waiting along with you.”

31 This verse is understood to mean, “I shall await your destruction just as you await my destruction” (Bḍ, Z); for other instances of this ironic statement with slight variations, see 6:158c; 7:71; 9:52; 10:20, 102; 11:122; 20:135; 32:30. Some view this statement as fulfilled by the defeat of the Makkans at the Battle of Badr in 2/624 (JJ).

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Do their minds command them to this, or are they a rebellious people?

32 The question is rhetorical, meaning that the disbelievers’ mental faculties could not possibly lead them to say that the Prophet is a soothsayer, a possessed man, or a poet (JJ, Z). Therefore, they must be a rebellious people.

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Or do they say, “He has invented it”? Nay, but they believe not.
33  An accusation similar to the charge the disbelievers make in 38:7: *We did not hear of this in the creed of latter days. This is naught but an invention.* According to many commentators, the beginning verses of the next sūrah (53:1–11) follow upon this verse by asserting that the Prophet neither invents or speaks out of his own desire; see the introduction to Sūrah 53.

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34  Then let them bring an account like unto it, if they are truthful.

34  This is one of the famous “challenge verses” of the Quran that implore those who claim the Quran to be a human creation to create its like if they can. See also 2:23–24; 10:38; 11:13. Regarding this challenge, 17:88 enjoins, *“Surely if mankind and jinn banded together to bring the like of this Quran, they would not bring the like thereof, even if they supported one another.”*

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35  Were they created from naught? Or are they the creators?

35  Both this verse and a similar verse, 56:59, question why the disbelievers do not acknowledge their Creator by worshipping Him. This verse could also mean, “Is it they who have created themselves?” Or it could be read as a reminder that human beings have been created from a draught of base fluid (32:8). It can also be understood as a reminder that human beings will be resurrected, as in 23:115: *Did you suppose, then, that We created you frivolously, and that you would not be returned unto Us?* (see also 74:36–40).

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36  Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no certainty.

36  The disbelievers do not think they have created the universe, but in failing to worship God they fail to acknowledge that He is the Creator and fail to worship Him accordingly. Several verses indicate that the pagan Arabs acknowledged that
God was the Creator, but did not conclude from this affirmation that they must worship God, as in 31:25: And wert thou to ask them, “Who created the heavens and the earth?” they would surely say, “God.” Say, “Praise be to God.” Nay, but most of them know not (see also 29:61; 39:38; 43:9, 87). From a Quranic perspective, that God is the Creator also indicates His Omnipotence and Omniscience, as in 67:14: Does He Who created not know? He is the Subtle, the Aware; and that He is able to resurrect, as in 36:81: Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof? Yea, indeed, He is the knowing Creator.

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Do they possess the treasuries of your Lord? Or are they in control?

37 Cf. 38:9. The treasuries can refer to the stores of God’s Mercy (38:9), the stores from which God sends prophecy to whom He wills (Z), God’s Knowledge (Z), or the Divine secrets hidden from human perception (R). See comment or 15:21: Naught is there, but that its treasuries lie with Us, and We do not send it down, save in a known measure. No human being could have such access to the Divine treasuries; hence the Prophet is instructed, Say, “I do not say to you that with me are the treasuries of God; nor do I know the unseen; nor do I say unto you that I am an angel. I follow only that which is revealed unto me” (6:50; see also 11:31). In this context, control most likely indicates the ability to measure out from God’s treasuries, thus to determine and to decree as does God.

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Or do they have a ladder whereby they listen? Then let their listener bring a clear warrant.

38 By ladder is meant a ladder to Heaven. This is one of several passages that speak of the audacity of those who deny revelation, asking whether they have better access to the truth, which from a Quranic perspective, can only be from God. In this vein, 37:156–57 states: Or have you a manifest authority? Bring your Book, then, if you are truthful. Elsewhere the Quran asks rhetorically, Or did We give them a book, such that they stand upon a clear proof from it? (35:40; see also 6:148; 34:44; 43:21; 68:37–38, 47). The notion of ascending to Heaven to listen to heavenly discourse is a concept related to the jinn, as in 72:8–10, where it
is implied that the jinn once had the privilege of overhearing the Heavenly discourse, but are now barred from it (see also 15:16–18; 67:5). In 38:65–70, the Prophet is instructed to declare that he himself has no knowledge beyond what is revealed to him and is not privy to what is said among the angels.

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Does He have daughters while you have sons?

39 This verse is similar to 37:149 and 43:16. The Quran frequently criticizes the idea that God has sons or daughters (see 2:116; 6:100; 9:30; 10:68; 17:40, 111; 18:4; 19:35, 88–93; 21:26; 25:2; 37:149, 153; 39:4; 43:16, 81–82; 52:39; 72:3). Here the disbelievers blaspheme by ascribing offspring to God and further blaspheme by ascribing to themselves offspring that according to their particular worldview would be superior to those they ascribe to God, namely, sons instead of daughters.

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Or dost thou ask a reward of them, such that they are burdened with debt?

Or do they possess the Unseen, such that they write it down?

40–41 These verses are repeated in 68:46–47. See also 23:72: Dost thou ask any recompense of them? For thy Lord's recompense is better, and He is the best of providers. This rhetorical question is answered by the Quran itself in 12:104: And thou askest of them no reward for it; it is naught but a reminder for the worlds.

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Or do they desire to devise [a scheme]? Then those who disbelieve shall be the ones against whom a scheme is devised!
This is one of several verses to illustrate the folly of those who would attempt to outwit God, for only His scheme is firm (68:45; cf. 7:184); see also 8:18; 22:15; 40:26; 77:39; 86:16–17.

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Or do they have a god other than God? Glory be to God above the partners they ascribe.

Were they to see a fragment falling from the sky, they would say, “A heap of clouds.”

This verse can be seen as a response to the disbelievers’ words to the Prophet in 26:187: Then make fragments from the sky fall upon us, if you are among the truthful (Bḍ). The implication is that even when the disbelievers receive a proof that they have requested, they will still disbelieve, as in 15:14–15: Were We to open for them a gate unto Heaven, that they might continue to ascend through it, they would say, “Our eyes are merely spellbound. Nay, we are a people bewitched!”

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So leave them until they meet the Day when they will be thunderstruck,

The command to leave them or elsewhere to turn away from them (4:63; 32:30; 51:54) recurs throughout the Quran, especially in the Makkan verses, implying that the Prophet should leave the disbelievers to their own devices, since they will eventually sow the seeds of their own demise in this world and will, in the Hereafter, be punished by God for their disbelief; see 52:29c. Their being thunderstruck describes the state that will come upon them the day they die (JJ), or on the Day of Resurrection (IK).

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a day when their scheming will avail them naught and they will not be helped.
Elsewhere it is said that God makes feeble the scheming of the disbelievers (8:18), because those who are guilty only plot against themselves, though they are unaware (6:123). The scheme of Satan is also described as ever feeble (4:76; see also 3:120; 8:18), since in the end only God’s scheme is firm (7:183; 68:45), and God is swifter in plotting (10:21). Thus 16:127 counsels the Prophet, And grieve not on their account, nor be distressed by what they plot.

And truly for those who do wrong there is punishment besides that. But most of them know not.

Punishment besides that may refer to the punishment in the grave before the Day of Resurrection (Sh; see the essay “Death, Dying, and the Afterlife in the Quran”) or to the punishment received in this life in addition to the punishment that will be meted out in the Hereafter (Sh), as in 32:21: And We make them taste the lesser punishment before the greater punishment, that they might turn back (IK, R). The last sentence is thus interpreted to mean that most people do not understand that the afflictions and calamities they suffer in this life are so that they might reflect and turn to God (IK).

Be patient with the judgment of thy Lord, for thou art before Our eyes; hymn the praise of thy Lord when thou dost rise;

This verse begins an address to the Prophet instructing him to bear patiently either the burden of revelation (Q), or the insults of the disbelievers, as in 50:39: So bear patiently that which they say. It can also be taken as general advice to all believers. In contrast to those who do not understand the nature of afflictions and for whom they thus bring angst, believers are said to be patient with all that God sends, the good and the bad. In this vein, a hadīth says, “No fatigue, disease, sorrow, sadness, hurt or distress befalls a Muslim—even if he be pricked by a thorn—but that God absolves some of his sins thereby.” Regarding the spiritual benefit of trials and afflictions, see commentary on 29:2–3; 67:2. Thou art before Our eyes indicates that God preserves and protects the Prophet and the believers against their enemies and their scheming (Bḍ, JJ). Hymn the praise of thy Lord when thou dost rise means to say, as was the custom of the Prophet, “Glory
be to Thee, O God, and with Thy praise,” when getting up in the morning or standing to leave an assembly (IK, Q, Sh). Some commentators also interpret this phrase to be an injunction to recite the formulas of praise that are said during the course of the ritual prayer (Q).

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49 and at night glorify Him, and at the receding of the stars.

49 At night glorify Him (cf. 50:40) refers to the obligatory night prayer (ʿishāʾ; Q), both the sunset prayer (maghrib) and the night prayer (Sh, T), or the two supererogatory prayer cycles before the obligatory morning prayer (ṣalāt al-fajr; Q, Sh). It can also be taken as a general command to glorify God throughout the night (Q). Some thus link it to the command to perform night vigil (tahajjud) in 17:79: And keep vigil in prayer for part of the night, as a supererogatory act for thee (IK). According to a saying attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās, “The receding of the stars indicates the two prostrations before the morning prayer, and after prostrations (50:40) indicates the two prostrations after the sunset prayer” (Q). It is reported that the Prophet did not perform any of the supererogatory prayers as frequently as he did the two cycles before the obligatory morning prayer; of them he said, “The two cycles of the supererogatory morning prayer are better than this world and all that is in it” (IK, Q).