

# When Satan comes knocking

## WHO KNOWS WHAT THE MESSENGER REALLY BRINGS?

The Persian poet Rumi told that Mo'avia, the first Caliph of the Ommiad lineage, was asleep one day in his palace when he was awakened by a strange man.

"Who are you?" Mo'avia asked.

"I am Lucifer," came the answer.

"And what do you want here?"

"It's time for your prayers and you are still sleeping."

Mo'avia was impressed. Why would the prince of darkness, he who always desires the soul of those of little faith, be trying to help him carry out a religious duty?

But Lucifer went on to explain: "Remember that I was brought up as an angel of light. Despite all that has happened in my existence, I cannot forget my origins. A man can travel to Rome or Jerusalem, but he always bears in his heart the values of his homeland: The same happens to me. I still love the Creator, who fed me when I was young and taught me to do good. When I rose up against Him, it was not because I did not love Him—quite the contrary, I loved Him so much that I was envious when He created Adam. At that moment I wanted to challenge the Lord and that was my ruination; even so, I still remember the blessings I was once granted, and perhaps doing good will enable me to return to Paradise."

Mo'avia answered: "I cannot believe what you are telling me. You have been responsible for the destruction of so many people on the face of the earth."

"Well, better believe it," insisted Lucifer. "God alone can construct and destroy because He is the Almighty. It was He who, by creating man, included among life's attributes desire, vengeance, compassion and fear. So, when you see all the evil around you, do not blame me, because I am only the mirror of the bad that happens."

Realizing something was wrong, Mo'avia began to pray desperately for God to enlighten him. He spent the whole night conversing and arguing with Lucifer, and despite the brilliant arguments he heard, he refused to become convinced.

When day was breaking, Lucifer finally gave in, explaining: "Okay, you're right. When I arrived here to wake you up so that you wouldn't miss your prayers, my intention was not to draw you closer to the Divine Light. I knew that if you failed to fulfill your duty you would feel very sad and during the next few days you would pray with renewed faith to ask for pardon for having forgotten the correct ritual. In God's eyes, each prayer said with love and repentance would be worth 200 prayers said in an automatic, ordinary manner. You would end up more purified and inspired, God would love you all the more and I would be farther away from your soul."

Lucifer disappeared and an angel of light entered at once: "Never forget today's lesson," the angel said to Mo'avia. "Sometimes evil comes disguised as a messenger of good, but his true intention is to cause more destruction."

On that and the following days, Mo'avia prayed with repentance, compassion and faith. His prayers were heard a thousand times over by God.