

## THE MAN, THE HAWK & THE DOVE

(from Nigeria)

Long ago in Nigeria, there was a man who had been blind and lame all his life. One evening, as he was sitting in front of his house, he couldn't help but feel sorry for himself. After all, he couldn't walk or see.

All of a sudden, a dove flew into his robe.

"Save me," the dove whispered urgently.

Then a hawk whished up and stopped in front of the man. "This dove is mine," squawked the hawk.

The man gripped the robe tightly.

"I beg you, you don't know how terribly hungry I am," said the hawk. "If I don't have that dove, I will die. I am a hawk and you know that we must eat what we can." Then he straightened up and said, "Hawks see for miles around. If you release the dove to me, I'll share the secret of how your eyesight can be restored."

The man hesitated. After all, wasn't it true that the basic nature of all things is that one beast hunts another?

"You mustn't listen to that hawk!" chirped the dove frantically. "If you save me from certain death, I'll tell you how your legs can be healed so you can walk."

What was he to do? Fortunately, the footsteps of his best friend were approaching.

"Should I gain my sight, or my legs?" he asked his friend.

The friend was silent. "Well," he said at last, "you have to paddle your own canoe. I can't help you decide this one."

"The next time you ask, I'll be sure to give you good advice, too!" the man called out as his friend walked quickly away.

The man thought for a few minutes. He asked the hawk, "Suppose you should get a chicken instead of the dove. Would that be all right?"

The hawk said, "Far better! I couldn't get a chicken, so I had to settle for this dove."

The man said, "I see." Then he told the dove, "Now, I will save your life, but you must keep your

# | a n | t h o | l o | g y |

promise to me." And he said to the hawk, "I will provide you with food, and you are bound to keep your promise to me."

So the man gave a chicken to the hawk. In return the hawk told him that he must get a certain leaf, prepare it, and squeeze the juice from it into his eyes. Then he would be able to see again. So the man released the hawk.

After the hawk had disappeared into the sky he said to the dove, "I protected you. You must keep your promise to me." So the dove told him what he must do to regain the use of his legs. And he released the dove.

The man followed the instructions of both the birds, the dove and the hawk, and was delighted to find that he could now see perfectly, and run anywhere if he wanted.