



A COLLECTION OF
STORIES
FROM
WEST AFRICA

Compiled and Illustrated by
David A. Naff



HOW HARE ASKED GOD FOR WISDOM



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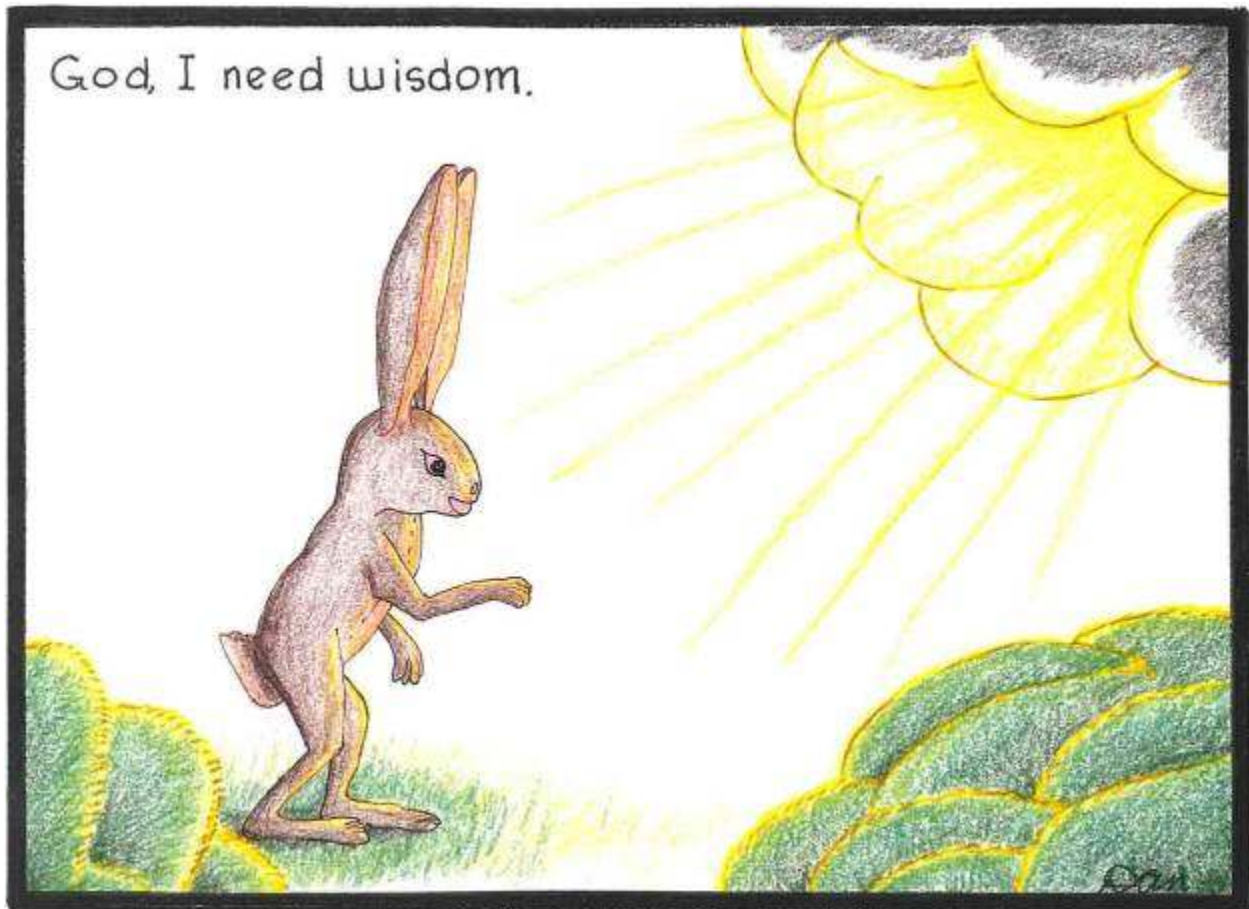
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By Spark Team

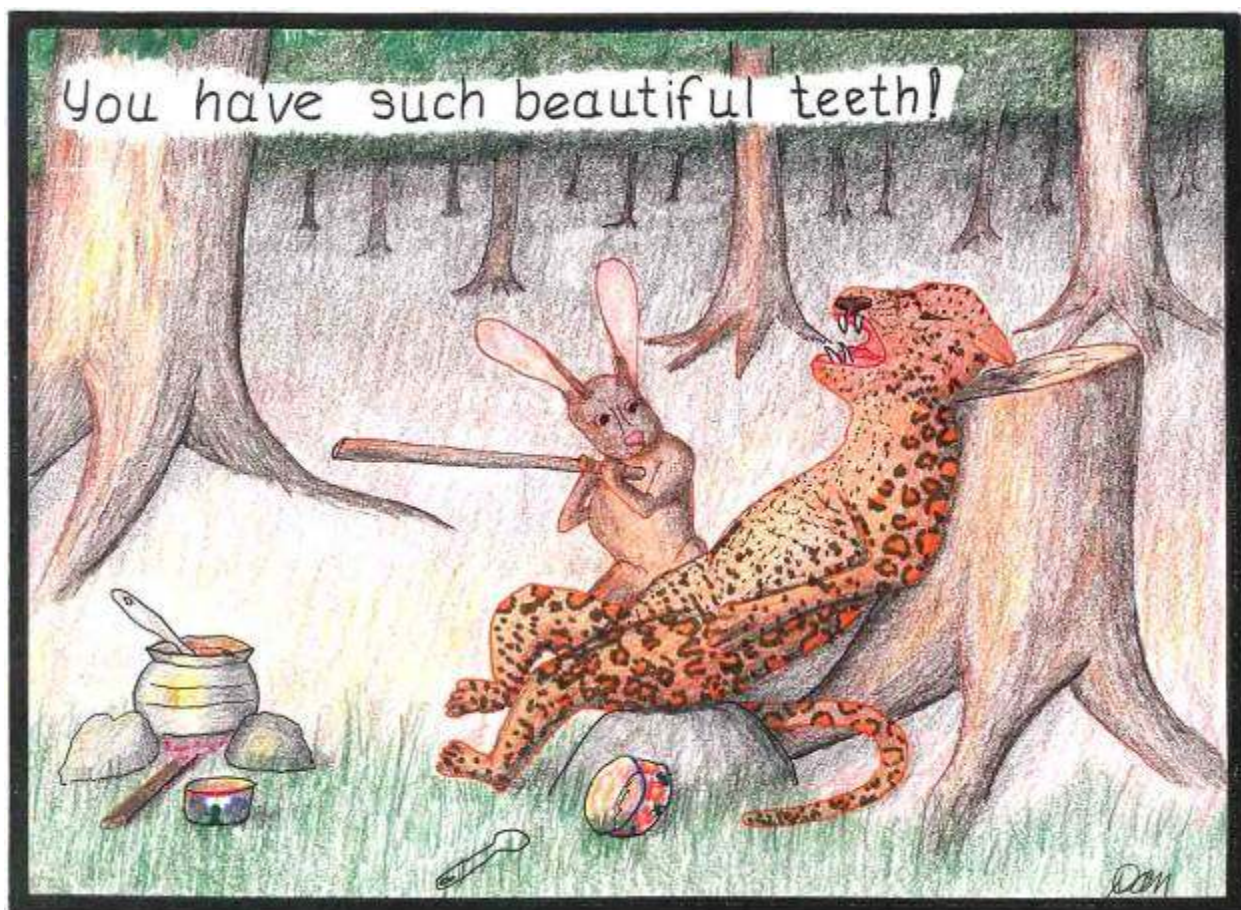


HOW HARE ASKED GOD FOR WISDOM

Note to reader: Words and phrases typical of West Africa are retained and indicated by italics.

Now Hare is a very small animal and not very strong. Therefore he became worried about his safety in the bush with so many large, strong animals. Hare decided to go to God and ask him for wisdom. Do you think he knew that James 1:5 says, "If you do not have wisdom, ask God for it. He is always ready to give it to you and will never say you are wrong for asking?"

Anyhow, Hare went to God and said, "I am a small animal, and in the bush there are many animals larger and stronger than I am. Therefore I must have wisdom if I am to survive. So, God, please give me wisdom."



God said, "Now, Hare, I have given every animal some wisdom. To some I gave more, to some I gave less, as it pleased Me. Before I give you more wisdom, you must do three things to show Me you are worthy of more wisdom. First, you must bring me two fresh Leopard teeth dripping with blood."

"Ay-yah," thought Hare. "How can I ever get two fresh leopard teeth dripping with blood? That one is *too hard*!"

He hopped slowly home thinking and thinking. After thinking for a long time, he got an idea. He cooked much food. Then he invited Leopard for dinner. Now that was very dangerous for Leopard loves to eat Hare, but Hare had the food all ready when Leopard arrived. It smelled so good that Leopard's mouth ran with water. But he did not eat Hare,

because Hare immediately gave Leopard a big bowl of the *sweet* smelling food.

Leopard greedily emptied the bowl in two gulps; but Hare had another already filled and quickly passed it to Leopard. Bowls of food followed each other down Leopard's throat until Leopard was very full. And of course, when you eat plenty, you get sleepy. Leopard got sleepy and yawned very wide.

Hare said, "Leopard, you have very beautiful teeth. No other animal has such long, strong, white teeth as you have."

Now Leopard was very vain and proud, so he opened his mouth very wide. Quickly, Hare hit Leopard in the mouth with a big stick. Out dropped two teeth. Before Leopard could recover, Hare grabbed the two teeth and ran to God with them.

"Only a wise animal can take two teeth from a living Leopard and still be alive," God said. "Now bring Me the most poisonous snake in the bush."

"*Ay-yah*," said Hare, "How can I ever bring God the most poisonous snake and stay alive myself. I need to *think plenty* on this one.

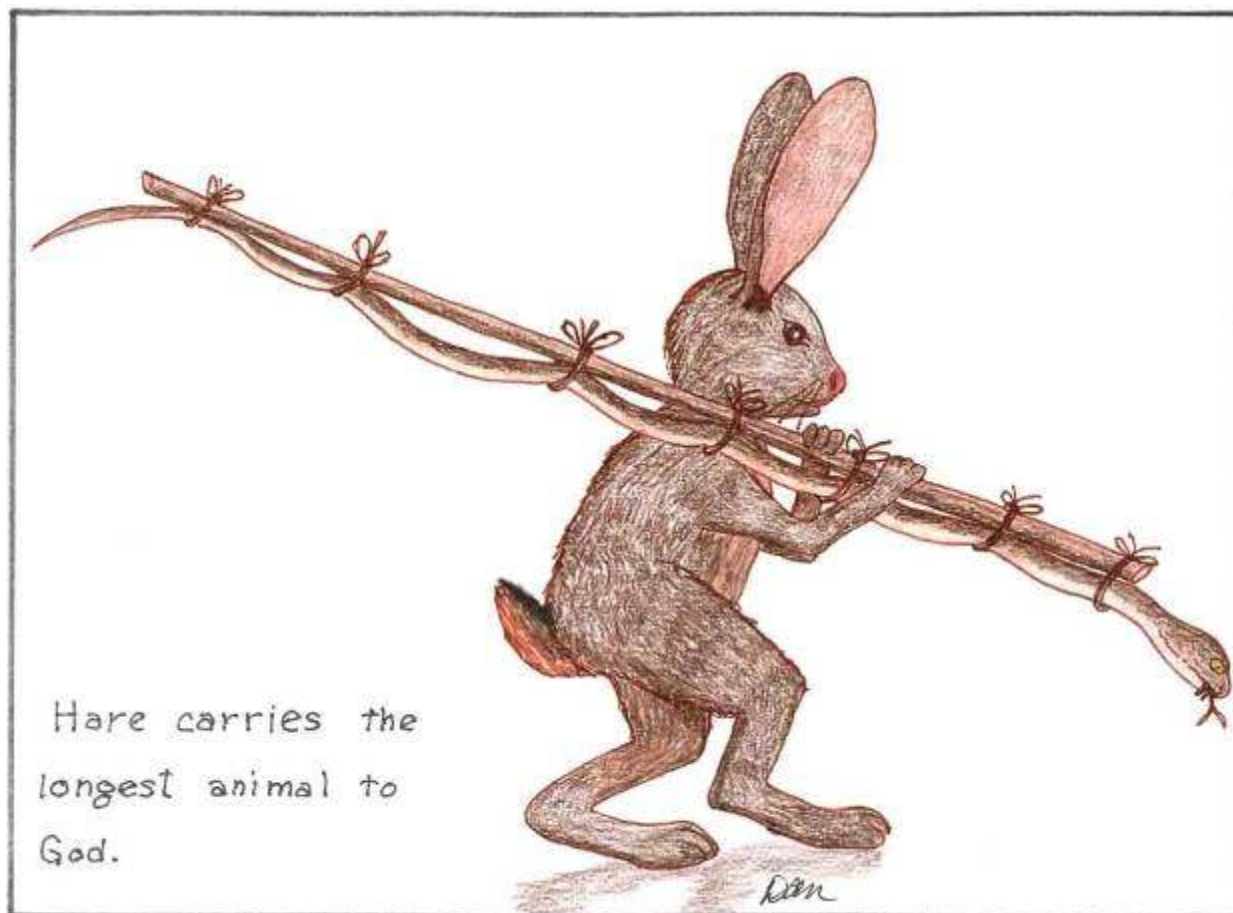
Again Hare thought long and hard. Then he went and cut a very long straight stick and began to measure all of the animals in the bush.

Snake* saw Hare measuring the animals and asked, "Hare, what are you doing?"

"God asked me to find the longest animal in the bush," Hare said.

"Well, I am the longest animal in the bush," bragged Snake. "You will not find a longer animal than I."

"Then, Snake, lay by my stick so I can measure you," said Hare.



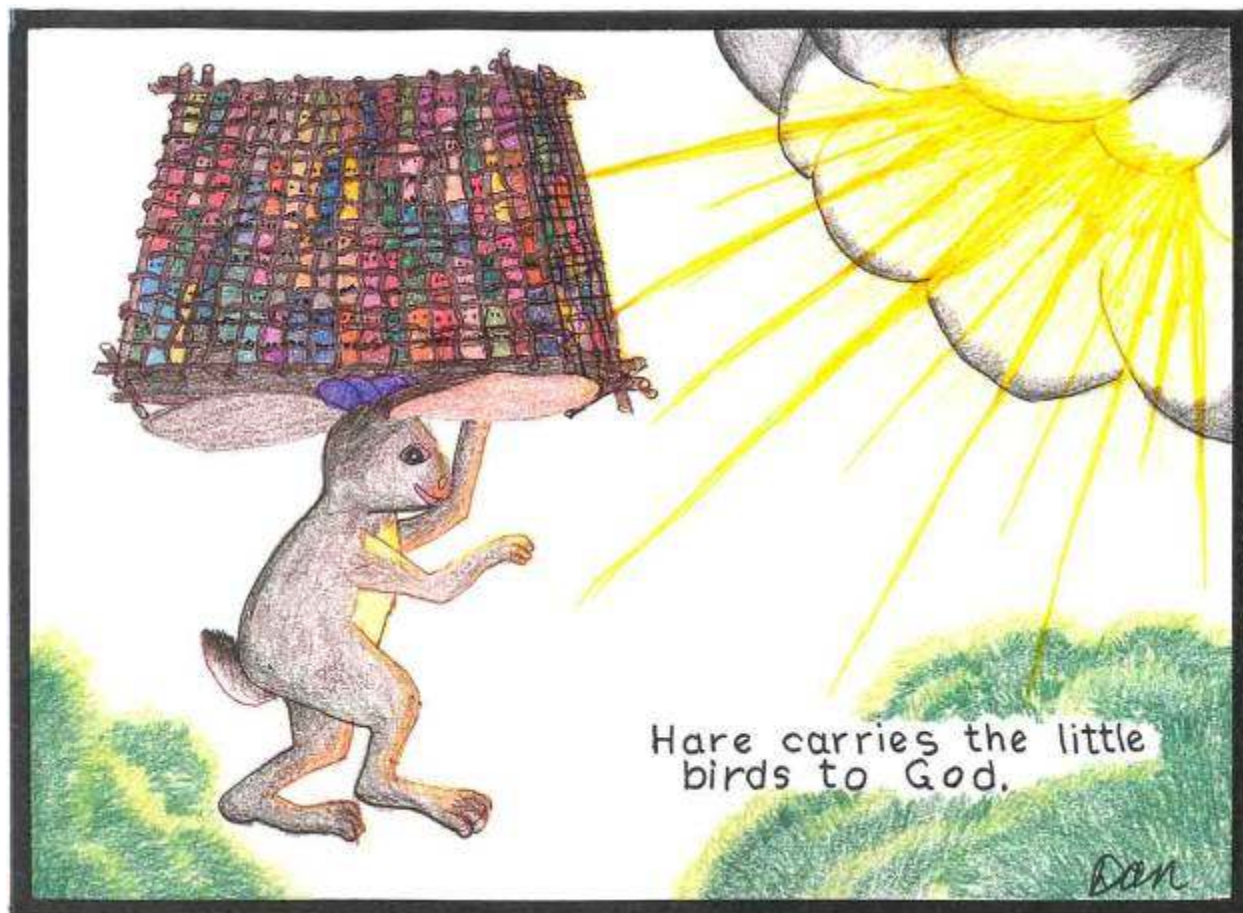
So, Snake lay by the stick Hare had cut.

"Yes. *For true*, you are the longest animal in the bush. Now let me tie you to my stick so I can carry you to God so He can see that you are the longest animal in the bush."

Snake allowed himself to be tied to the stick. Hare carried the stick with Snake tied to it to God.

God saw the most poisonous snake tied to the long stick that Hare was carrying. "Only a very wise animal could have brought to Me the most poisonous snake in the bush and still be alive." He said.

God cut the vines that held Snake to the long stick as He said, "For true, you are the longest and most poisonous snake in the bush. I have seen you and so now you can go back into the bush."

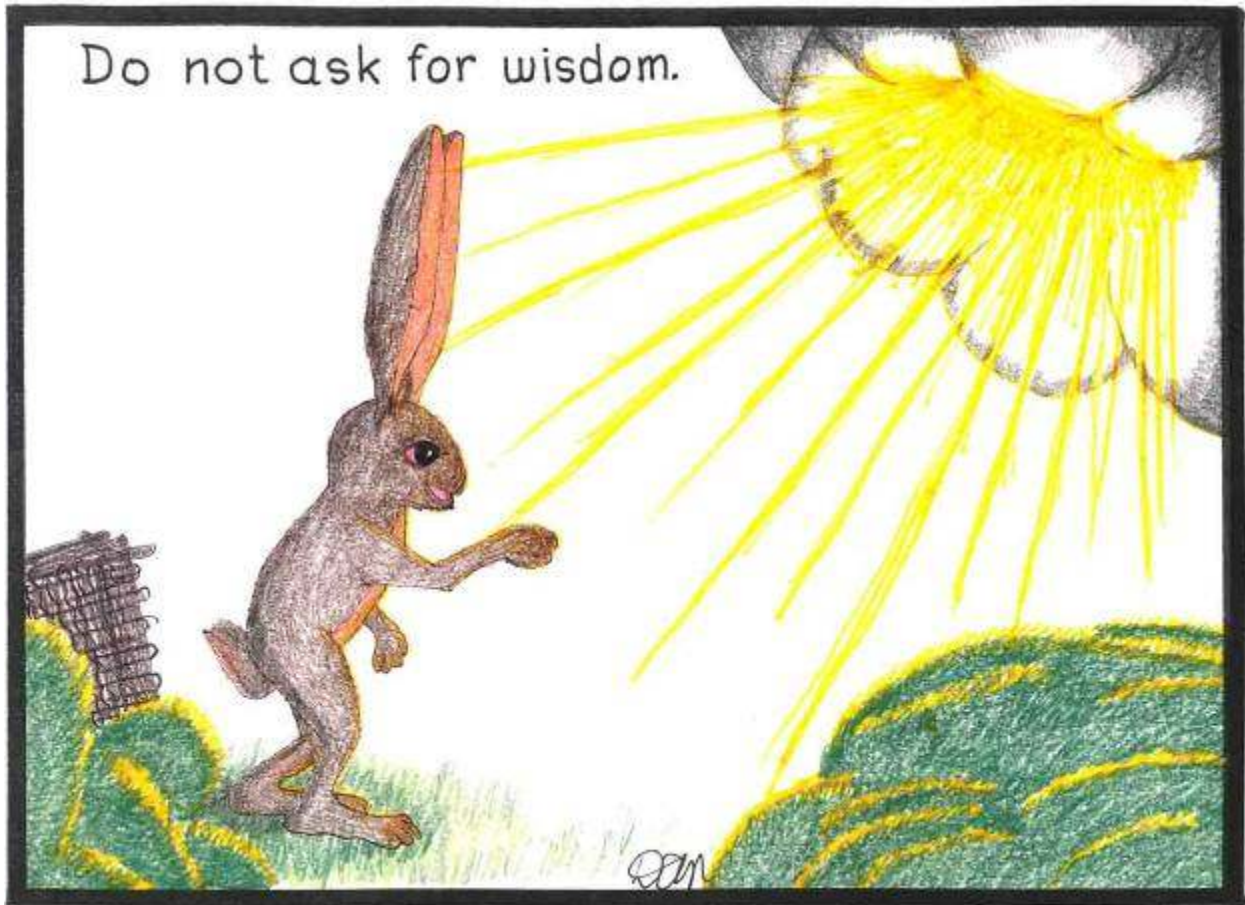


Then God said to Hare, “ Now you must bring to Me all of the little birds.”

As he went home, Hare thought very hard again. “Now how can I bring all the little birds to God? They are so many and they are all over the place!”

“Ah-hah! I’ll try that,” he said to himself as an idea popped into his head.

So, Hare went home and built a very large strong cage. Then Hare started telling the birds that on that very night Snake planned to eat all of the little birds in the bush. But if they would come into Hare's strong cage, they would be safe where Snake could not eat them. The word spread quickly among all the birds. Quickly they all flew into Hare's cage. When all the



birds were safely in the cage Hare closed the door. Then Hare carried the cage to God.

God looked at the big cage filled with all the little birds from the bush. God opened the cage and let all of the little birds out.

Then God spoke to Hare. "Hare, you have brought to Me two of Leopard's teeth dripping with blood. You have brought to Me the most poisonous snake in the bush. You have brought to Me all of the little birds from the bush. Anyone who has as much wisdom as you have, does not need more wisdom than I gave you when I made you. Go home, Hare, and never ask Me for more wisdom again."

What does God say about real wisdom? Proverbs 9:10 it says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." God has made man very clever. Man can do many things. We should thank God for the wisdom He has given us and use it to please Him.

Something to think about: Did you notice how Hare lied to Snake and the little birds from the bush. God does not want us to lie. How could Hare have done what God asked him to do without lying?

*probably a black Mamba. Their poison is very strong and they can get to 13 feet in length.

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