

## Monkey and Trouble

(Time – 5:20)

Far away from here, in the Caribbean sea, on the island of Haiti, there lived a poor young woman. Once a year she had a treat. Once a year she'd take the honey from the bees and sell it at market, and with the money from the honey she'd buy herself something special. Maybe some cloth to patch the rips in her dress, maybe some ribbons to tie in her hair, maybe a piece of leather to fix the sole of her sandal. And the day had come.

She walked through the forest with the pot on her head, dreaming of what she was going to buy. And as she walked, her foot caught against a tree root and she tripped. The pot fell from her head and smashed. Honey all over the path. [Sighing] 'Papa God,' she said. 'You give us so much trouble.' And she walked back to her hut.

Now, all of this had been seen. All of this had been seen by a monkey. The monkey scampered down the tree. He scuttled towards the shiny, sticky stuff on the track. The bees were gathering around it. He sniffed it; it smelled good. He stuck his finger into it. He licked the tip of his finger and it tasted delicious. Oh boy! He began to scoop handfuls of this stuff and push it into his mouth.

When there was none left he sucked his hairy fingers. He thought to himself, 'I've got to have more of that stuff. But I don't know what it was called. How can I get it if I don't know what it's called? What did I hear the woman say? 'Oh Papa God! You give us so much trouble.' That must be the name of this stuff!' So he scampered up a tree, jumped from the top of a tree onto a cloud, clambered over the clouds until he saw before him the hut of Papa God.

There he was, on the veranda, sitting in a rocking chair. 'Hello little one,' said Papa God. 'You've come a long way to see me. How can I help you?'

'I wonder,' said Monkey, 'if you might give me something.'

'If I can,' said Papa God, 'I will. What do you want?'

The monkey said, 'Trouble.'

'What?'

'Oh, I know,' said Monkey. 'You've given me loads of trouble. But I want more trouble. I want as much trouble as you can possibly give me.'

Papa God said, 'Stay there.' He went inside the hut. He came back out with a sack that was tied tight at the top with a piece of rope. 'Take this sack. Climb down the tree. Keep walking until you can see no trees in any direction. Then, open the sack, and I can promise you lots of trouble.'

'Oh, thank you so much! Lots and lots of trouble! You're so kind.' He swung the sack onto his shoulder. Monkey climbed down the tree, walked out of the forest. When he could see no trees in any direction, eagerly he unpicked the knot in the rope around the neck of the sack, pushed his thumbs into the mouth of the sack and opened it. Inside were four big, black, wild dogs.

RA-RA-RA-RA-RA-RA-RA

Poor monkey, he turned and he ran. Now when monkeys are in trouble they scamper up a tree. But he was in a place where no trees grew: lots and lots of trouble. Monkey was growing tired, the dogs were getting closer when suddenly – boing! – out of the ground grew a tree. Monkey eagerly scampered up the trunk, sat on a branch: 'uhhuh-uhhuh-uhhuh-uhhuh-' [panting].

The dogs sat at the foot of the tree until night came. The dogs wandered off. Monkey climbed down the tree and returned to the forest. Who made that tree grow, in a moment, in an instant? It was Papa

God because Papa God knows too much trouble is a terrible thing. Everyone needs a little help.  
Everyone needs a little hope.