

Disaster at Pembroke! For some reason my big computer stopped being able to access the Internet from 10 pm last night and because it's a Sunday today no one's around to sort out the problem. So I have to type this email with my iPad, which can still connect to the Internet.

But it's appropriate that things should have gone wrong just before I tell you the story of Pandora's box, because the story comes from the Ancient Greeks, who used it to explain why bad things happened in the world. The story goes that the top God, Zeus, wanted to punish humanity because it had learned the secret of making fire from a lesser God called Prometheus (pronounced 'Prom - ee - thee - oos'). So Zeus created the most beautiful woman in the world and introduced her to Prometheus' brother, Epimetheus (pronounced 'Ep - ee - mee - thee - oos'). Epimetheus immediately fell madly in love with her and he and Pandora decided to get married straightaway. Zeus said, 'That's fantastic! Pandora - as a wedding gift, I give you this box, which contains lots of presents from all the Gods. But you must NEVER open the box.' Pandora thought, 'That's weird: why can't I open the box if it's got lots of presents inside? I wonder what's inside?' But Pandora decided to obey the instruction not to open the box.

A few days after the wedding, when Pandora and Epithemus were living together, Pandora got to thinking about the box again, and thought, 'I can't stand it anymore - I must know what's in the box!' So that night she crept into the room where the box was kept, and opened it. Inside she had expected to see gold or jewellery, but instead Zeus had put ALL BAD THINGS for human beings inside the box and they flew straight out of the box as soon as it was opened. And that's how things like sickness and sadness and worry and misery and poverty and death entered the world. Pandora was horrified at what she had done, and shut the box as quickly as possible. But it was too late – all the bad things had flown out.

But there was still one thing left in the box, and Pandora could hear it inside the box, saying, 'Please let me out - it's really important you let me out now that you've let all the bad things into the world.' So Pandora opened the box again, and HOPE came out of the box and entered the world. Because with all the bad things in the world, it's important never to stop hoping that things will be made right again, as they will, by Jesus, in the fullness of time. So let's hope the coronavirus will be sorted out soon, and that my Internet access will be sorted out even sooner.



Another time I will tell you the story of how we Christians think that bad things came into the world, which is the story of ADAM AND EVE. But that's for another time.