

Pandora's Box?

1 A very long time ago, during the Golden Age, people everywhere were joyful and happy. It was always spring, the earth was covered with flowers, and only gentle winds blew to set the flowers dancing. No one had any work to do and played all the time. People lived on the mountain's fruits and berries, which grew abundantly in the forests. Goodness was everywhere as rivers flowed with milk and honey. Throughout the world there were no swords or weapons that men could use to fight each other. No one had ever experienced trouble of any kind.

2 During this time there were two brothers who were gods. Their names were Epimetheus and Prometheus. They had sent fire as a gift to humans to help them. Zeus did not like humans and when he found out what the brothers had done, he stomped around so loud it sounded like thunder. His eyes burned with flames because once a god had given a gift to anyone, the gift could not be taken away.

3 Zeus wanted to get even with the humans for accepting the gift and he also wanted to teach the two brothers a lesson, so Zeus came up with a plan. He had a new creature made who would be as unique as a snowflake and unlike anything man had ever known before. The creature would be a woman made up with a mix of good and bad things. She was created from a lump of clay, which included love and hate, precious gems and rocks, along with beauty and ugliness. Both positive and negative characteristics made up this beautiful creature.

4 "Come now!" ordered Zeus to the other gods, with a scowl on his face. "Let us give some special gifts to this woman," he said with a sneer. The gods came quickly and began to give a gift to this marvelous creature. First the goddess Athena gave her the gift of craft and taught her to sew. Aphrodite gave her beauty of course, and the gift of charm. Apollo taught her to sing and play the harp, and Hera gave her the gift of curiosity. All the gods gave her something, so they called her Pandora, which means "All-Gifted."

5 Pandora was so beautiful and so wondrously gifted that no one could help, but love her. Zeus snickered as he thought to himself how easy his plan of revenge was coming together. He had Hermes, the messenger take Pandora to Epimetheus to be his wife. This was to trick Epimetheus into believing that Zeus had forgiven him and his brother for giving fire to humans. Pandora brought along with her a



golden chest that Zeus insisted she take as a gift from him. Athena had warned her to NEVER open the chest or look at the things inside.

6 Epimetheus welcomed Pandora with great joy even though his brother Prometheus had warned him to be careful of any gift that came from Zeus. Prometheus believed that Zeus could not be trusted. Pandora was happy in her new home and Epimetheus was very pleased. This all changed one day when Epimetheus was out hunting and Pandora got bored. She whispered under her breath, “I wonder what could be in that golden chest Zeus gave me?” Pandora began to look at the chest and became very intrigued. “I have to know what is in the box, I bet there are lovely jewels,” she thought to herself. She was suspicious and began thinking of how she could look in the chest.

7 The more she thought about the golden chest; the more she wanted to see what was in it. Every day Pandora took it down from its shelf and felt the lid. She would try to peek inside it without opening it up. “Why should I care what Athena told me, is she trying to keep something good from me?” she questioned aloud. Pandora broke the seal on the golden chest and lifted the lid just a little bit to get a peek inside. All at once, terrible creatures flew out of the box. There were big horseflies, beetles, and wasps that were stinging and biting. They fluttered for a little while and then flew away to find all the homes of humans. Up until that moment, mankind had never experienced any kind of sickness or trouble, but now these creatures were spreading disease everywhere. Before Pandora had opened the chest, humans never worried about anything that tomorrow could bring. Pandora felt terrible and wept for what she had done.

8 These creatures flew into every house and tried to put an end to man’s joy by bringing pain, sorrow, and death to every household. It would have been disastrous if it weren’t for a little winged creature. This angelic creature was named Hope. She promised Pandora and Epimetheus to never leave them and she told them that as long as there was life, there would always be hope.

