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THE UNOPENED TREASURE—Treasure hunting has inspired hundreds of people through the centuries resulting in disappointments for most and instant wealth for others. So is the story of some right here in the area of this editor. While I cannot use names, I am told that because of this area's occupation by the French and Spanish (some of them pirates), such treasures are buried within sight of the office of FOMMI. Furthermore, some have evidently been found in the last hundred years but kept very quiet. My, what a feeling to live in an area where perhaps millions and millions of dollars in treasure are hidden! Why, I might actually have walked over the very spot where it is beneath the ground. To find such treasure takes years of searching.

You may remember the story of Mel Fisher—how after sixteen years of disappointments and false hopes he persevered to see his dream come true. On July 19, 1986, off the Florida Keys, the Spanish galleon *Atocha* was found with over four hundred million dollars in gold alone! Whoa! What a find—but I've had a "find" worth far more than the treasures of the *Atocha*! Really. It took over twenty years of searching (most of the time in the wrong place), but I can truly say I found not just gold, but the One who made the gold, the true and living God. In fact, gold is so plenteous where God is that they paved the streets with it! Have you ever made the "find"? Jeremiah of old said about God, *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your HEART"* (Jeremiah 29:13). Wouldn't it be a joke to live on earth a few years as a millionaire but spend eternity as a pauper? I can tell you how to find this treasure. The treasure map is in the Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ is the key that will open the treasure. *"In whom are hid all the treasures..."* (Colossians 2:3). Why, you can even have it today! Many are saying, "I believe in God and Jesus and Heaven," but my friend, you have never opened the treasure chest! Suppose you sent me a special gift, but I never opened it? I read on the card that it is from you and believe you sent it but still I never opened it. If you visited me you would be disappointed, would you not? God feels the same way today. He gave a treasure beyond measure to us years ago, but few take it and open it to see the prize. To believe is one thing; to open is another. Open God's great gift, the Bible, today. It will change your life for time and eternity.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21).
—AWM

"...a net...cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind." Matthew 13:47

Number 1

COLORFUL SEAS—The Black Sea is black because of a high concentration of hydrogen sulfide. The Red Sea gets its red hue from recurring bloom of small algae. Russia's White Sea earned its name from the ice that covers it most of the year. The Yellow Sea derives its color from mud that rivers carry into it.

Of all the seas with colorful names, it seems to me the Dead Sea is the most fascinating. It is the lowest body of water on the surface of the earth. Although it is fed by the Jordan and smaller rivers, nothing flows out of it. The only escape for water is evaporation. Hence the sea is dead—really dead. There is not life in it because the centuries of accumulated solids make life impossible.

Many a person's life is as the Dead Sea. They want only to take in, never to give out, but little by little this chokes out all life. There are many walking Dead Men!

GRAPES OR RAISINS—The California raisin industry had its beginning in September 1873 when the San Joaquin Valley suffered a severe heat wave. Up until then California's grapes were either made into wine or sold as fresh fruit. That year the heat dried up the grapes before they could be picked and used for either purpose. All of the grape growers gave up and considered their crops a loss. That is, all except one grower. He sold his withered grapes to a grocer in San Francisco who resold them as a "Peruvian Delicacy". The public loved them and the California raisin industry was off and running.

Like the California grape growers of 1873, perhaps you are experiencing a hot, dry spell in life when nothing seems to go right. If so, *"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him..."* (Psalm 37:5). *"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD..."* (Jeremiah 17:7). *"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water...his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper"* (Psalm 1:3).

THE VILLAGE THAT LIVED BY THE BIBLE—It was early in 1945, when, as a war correspondent on Okinawa, Clarence W. Hall first came upon Shimabuku, the strangest and most inspiring community he ever saw. Huddled beneath its groves of banyan and twisted pine trees, this remote village of some 1000 souls was in the path of the "American" advance and so received a severe shelling.

But when an advance patrol swept up to the village compound, the GIs stopped dead in their tracks. Barring their way were two little old men; they bowed low and began to speak. The battle-hardened sergeant, wary of tricks, held up his hand and summoned an interpreter. The interpreter shook his head. "I don't get it. Seems we're being welcomed as 'fellow Christians'. One says he's the mayor of the

village, the other is the schoolmaster. That's a Bible the older one has in his hand."

Guided by the two old men—Mojun Nakamura the mayor and Shosei Kina the schoolmaster—Clarence and the patrol cautiously toured the compound. They'd seen other Okinawan villages, uniformly down-at-the-heels and despairing. By contrast, this one shone like a diamond in a dung heap. Everywhere they were greeted by smiles and dignified bows.

Proudly the two old men showed them their spotless homes, their terraced fields, fertile and neat, their storehouses and granaries, their prized sugar mill. Gravely the old men talked on, and the interpreter said, "They've only met one American before, long ago. Because he was a Christian they assume we are, too, though they can't quite understand why we came in shooting."

Piecemeal, the incredible story came out. Thirty years before, an American missionary on his way to Japan had paused at Shimabuku. He'd stayed only long enough to make a pair of converts (these same two men), teach them a couple of hymns, leave them a Japanese translation of the Bible and exhort them to live by it. They'd had no contact with any Christian since. Yet during those 30 years, guided by the Bible, they had managed to create a Christian democracy at its purest. How had it happened? Picking their way through the Bible, the two converts had found not only an inspiring "Person" on whom to pattern a life, but sound precepts on which to base their society. They'd adopted the Ten Commandments as Shimabuku's legal code and the Sermon on the Mount as their guide to social conduct. In Kina's school the Bible was the chief literature. It was read daily by all students, and major passages were memorized. In Nakamura's village government the precepts of the Bible were law.

Nurtured on this Book, a whole generation of Shimabukans had drawn from it their ideas of human dignity and of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The result was plain to see. Shimabuku for years had had no jail, no brothel, no drunkenness, no divorce; there was a high level of health and happiness.

Next day the tide of battle swept the GIs on. But a few days later, Clarence requisitioned a jeep and a speaking driver and went back to Shimabuku. Over the winding roads outside the village, huge truck convoys and endless lines of American troops moved dustily; behind them lumbered armoured tanks and heavy artillery. But inside, Shimabuku was an oasis of serenity. Once again Clarence strolled through the quiet village streets, soaking up Shimabuku's calm.

There was a sound of singing. Clarence and his driver followed it and came to Nakamura's house, where a curious religious service was under way. Having no knowledge of churchly forms or ritual, the Shimabukans had developed their own. There was much Bible reading by Kina, repeated in singsong fashion by the worshippers. Then came hymn singing. The tunes of the two hymns the missionary had taught—"Fairest Lord Jesus" and "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"—had naturally suffered some changes, but they were recognizable. Swept up in the

spirit of "All Hail the Power", they joined in. After many prayers, voiced spontaneously by people in the crowd, there was a discussion of community problems. With each question, Kina turned quickly to some Bible passage to find the answer. The book's imitation-leather cover was cracked and worn, its pages stained and dogeared from 30 years' constant use. Kina held it with the reverent care one would use in handling the original Magna Carta.

When the service was over Clarence and his driver waited as the crowd moved out. The driver whispered hoarsely, "So this is what comes out of only a Bible and a couple of old guys who wanted to live like Jesus! Maybe we're using the wrong kind of weapons."

Time had dimmed the Shimabukans' memory of the missionary; neither Kina nor Nakamura could recall his name. They did remember his parting statement. "Study this Book well. It will give you strong faith. And when faith is strong, everything is strong."

FISHY QUESTION—Last edition's riddle, why couldn't the bicycle stand up by itself was answered by "because it was two-tired". See if you can come up with the names of eight real animals who are the opposite of the following: richcupine, legadillo, cantgaroo, noneigator, stoprilla, goodger, uncleaner, and tellthetruthon. Write soon!

FISHY HUMOR

--A slice of pie costs \$2.50 in Jamaica and \$3 in the Bahamas. These are some of the "pie rates" of the Caribbean.

--An old fisherman said, "I don't have gray hair; I have wisdom highlights."

--Vance Havner once said he didn't eat hash away from home because he didn't know what it was made from, and he didn't eat hash at home because he knew what it was made from.

--What did one fish lawyer say to another? "My client's going to need a minute to mullet over."

--What time did the man go to the dentist? Tooth hurt-y.

--Why did the coach go to the bank? To get his quarter back.

--Which is faster, hot or cold? Hot, because you can catch cold.

--What kind of egg did the evil chicken lay? A deviled egg.

--What did one ocean say to another ocean? Nothing, they just waved.

--What is the best way to watch a fly fishing tournament? Live stream.

--Can February March? No, but April May.

--What do you call a fake noodle? An impasta.

--Did you know that milk is the fastest liquid on earth? It is pasteurized before you even see it.

--What does a baby computer call his father? Data.

--I made a pencil with two erasers. It was pointless.

--Why are spiders so smart? They can find everything on the web.

--Don't trust atoms; they make up everything.

--How can you tell a dogwood tree? By its bark.

--Where do shrimp go for cash? To the prawn shop.