

# Brazil News



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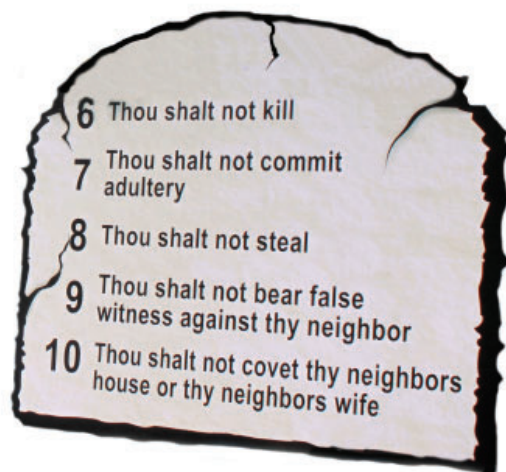
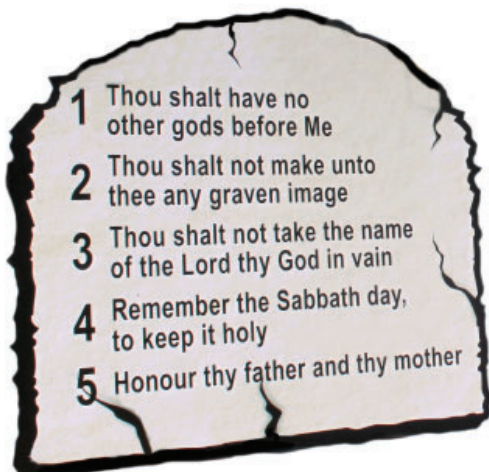
Editorializing

## Thou Shalt Not...

The Fifth through Tenth Commandments, all “Thou Shalt Nots,” are significant in that they reflect what the law of nature teaches mankind everywhere. The first Four are only followed by those who have received specific instructions concerning the True God and His will.

Primitive peoples living in jungles or deserts, who have no concept of the first four commandments, have their own application of the final “Thou Shalt Nots.” Yes, they kill, they commit adultery, they steal, they bear false witness, they covet (not even civilized nations are exempt from any of these). Yet, within their tribal confines they have individual unwritten codes of conduct which specify when killing, adultery...are permissible or reprehensible.

In modern nations the Thou Shalt Nots have become an integral part of the legislative process accompanied by tens of thousands of volumes of jurisprudence. It



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is exactly the manner in which the Ten Commandments, all of them, are valued and enforced that determines the moral status of nations. When adherence to these basic principles becomes blurred and enforcement lax—indeed, repudiated—peoples begin an inexorable lapse into immorality and cultural savagery.

By nature we are myopic. We believe that with a large windshield we can see far down the road into the future. We easily forget that all good drivers feel unprepared to grasp the wheel of their vehicle without the small rearview mirrors, only a fraction of the size of the windscreen. The ability to see the large picture depends on our willingness to carefully adjust the rearview mirror and pay attention to the lessons of history.

It is true that in the Old Testament there are repeated cases of major revivals when Godly prophets or kings assumed positions of leadership. It must be remembered, however, that church and state operated as one unit. It must also be remembered that very seldom did these renewals last more than the lifespan of two or three prophets or kings. Finally, after a turbulent history of many prophets and kings, the secular kingdom ceased to exist and the spiritual kingdom was left in disarray.

In the New Dispensation, church and state are separate entities, with the microscopic Vatican as a symbolic exception. Through the centuries different reformers attempted to consolidate the two powers, never with lasting success, for it was not to be so. Religion should not be secular, however secularity should be directed by religious principles.

In the last two millennia nations in Asia, Africa and Europe have hosted God's people. Even though many of these nations were not founded on Christian principles, they have sometimes grudgingly, sometimes gratefully, and occasionally maliciously, given space to God's people. Always they were pilgrims and strangers, residing with spiritual tourist visas—never with citizenship—except for those who lost the way and were swept away in a deluge of worldliness.

Truly impressive is the influence the religious sojourners exercised on their host countries. Even more impressive is the general spiritual decadence that befell these nations after the exodus of God's people. In addition to a moral degeneration, their doors swung shut on the truth. Present day mission endeavors prove to be extremely frustrating in these countries. The void left by exiting truth is all too often filled with bold licentiousness.

Without a doubt many of those who migrated to North America, especially in its early history, were seeking religious freedom. It was a migration directed and sanctioned by the Almighty. Even though not all the Founding fathers were religiously inclined, they had great respect for the ecclesiastical laws of nature, that is, the Ten Commandments.

Many of the emigrants believed in New Testament requirements of salvation, at times quite imperfectly, but the incubator of the Ten Commandments produced citizens with a strong sense of morality and civility. Some were not religiously inclined. In spite of this, the law of nature taught them the importance of the final six Thou Shalt Nots in civil government.

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This sense of morality present in the conscience, even of unbelievers, created a vigorous nation—so vigorous, in fact, that it was able to send hundreds of thousands of its finest young men abroad to fight for the freedom of other peoples, freeing from captivity exactly those nations in Europe that centuries before rejected the truth. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, “That was America’s finest hour.”

It was during World War II, when America, as the heart of the Allied armies, defeated fascism and imperialism, in the greatest bloodbath of all history, that the incoming tide of morality began to recede.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower says that as a youth he didn’t know anyone who was divorced. For a woman to give birth out of wedlock painted her in scarlet and placed the mark of Cain on the brow of her offspring. Moral purity was a recognized statute of nature. When transgressed, the offender was splotted by a social leprosy. Except in lewd circles, never were such trespasses glorified.

The revival that took place in the later 19th century and early 20th century by D. L. Moody and other great evangelists began playing out and by the onset of WWII, there was a perceptible erosion of the Biblical standard of morality. Scarlet became starlet (“a young movie actress...publicized for starring roles” —Merriam-Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary). That which before was considered to be works of darkness, was now glamorized in theaters by scarlet “starlets” in hypocritical robes of white for all who wished to see.

As young men volunteered or were drafted, it was known by all that after basic training, they would probably be shipped overseas where they would enter the fight for freedom. This act of patriotism and the possibility they would die on the battlefield touched the sensibilities of the populace. They became heroes even before walking up the gangplank of troop transports anchored in major harbors.

The national fervor, the desire to show a tangible solidarity with the departing heroes became contaminated by the “liberated” starlets who openly and wantonly desecrated the Biblical precept of morality on theater screens. Young women glamorously gave up their purity as a farewell gift to departing heroes. Some were hastily married.

When the war ended in 1945, soldiers returned to America. The unmarried soon married. What resulted is known as the “baby boom.” In the following years tens of thousands of babies were born to these returning servicemen.

And there was a price to pay.

These young men and women who lost their respect for the sanctity of marriage now had their own children to raise. Needless to say, not all the soldiers, nor all the young ladies, by any means, were swept away by this tsunami of immorality. And surely there were those who repented. Even so, many of the baby boom children were not raised in homes that cultivated the historic respect for the Thou Shalt Nots. Rather there was born a defiant attitude of Why Not?

The Ten Commandments are a package, a capsule, or if you will, a pandora’s box. Once opened and tampered with and the Thou Shalt Nots reduced to Why Nots?, the lid can no longer be shut. Without a major upheaval brought on by outside sources, the

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effect is irreversible. It is the great watershed, the moral Continental Divide, the point in which the path leads downward and the brakes are increasingly lost.

Since the beginning the world has faced innumerable moral and spiritual crises. In a few instances these situations have resulted in terrible persecution of the faithful, at times taking some to the point of extinction (which does not mean they weren't faithful unto death). As a general rule, however, they were able to flee to a place of safety, albeit frequently temporary.

The Netherlands, Switzerland, Poland, Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, England, and doubtlessly other nations, including several countries of the now defunct Soviet Union, hosted God-fearing peoples through the ages.

We now turn to North America, and more specifically to the United States...

(Because of my limited knowledge of Canadian history, comments will be directed to the US, recognizing that Canada was a nation of refuge for many fleeing persecution, especially from the Soviet countries.)

I have frequently written on what I believe was a divine mission given to America, and will not repeat myself. Suffice it to say that she was indeed a refuge for "the huddled masses," as the inscription on the Statute of Liberty reads. Barring the Second and Third Commandments, the Constitution was firmly anchored on the Thou Shalt Nots—possibly more so than any other civil nation in world history.

It is possible I am attributing excessive importance to the open immorality of the first half of the last century at the time of WWII. I emphasize *open*, for hidden immorality has always existed. However, when the shackles of darkness are removed from sinning, and transgression becomes open and is practiced unabashedly, it metastasizes.

After Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941 by Japanese bombers, in a speech to the nation President Roosevelt declared that it is "a date that will live in infamy." And truly, it was a terrible day.

Of much greater infamy is January 22, 1972, when the US Supreme Court handed down a lopsided 7-2 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, legalizing the slaughter of innocent children in the form of abortion. For the first time in United States history one of the Ten Commandments, one of the Thou Shalt Nots—Thou shalt not kill—was declared unconstitutional.

On June 26, 2015 the same Court ruled in a 5-4 decision that same-sex marriages are constitutional. Significantly, there is no Thou Shalt Not in the Bible for this ignominy. We can only assume that this aberration was so far out of bounds as to not be noticeably practiced in Old Testament times. However, when this evil was openly practiced in two renegade cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, instead of a Thou Shalt Not there was fire and brimstone.

On these two dates the United States of America legalized the killing of innocent life and the practice of gross immorality.

Truly, these are dates that will live in infamy, incalculably more than the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Today, 44 years after the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision, and one year after the

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calamitous legalization of same-sex marriage, a dark cloud hovers over the Land of the Free.

Reliable sources calculate that since the *Roe v. Wade* decision 44 years ago, 56 million legal abortions have been performed in the US. This is more than all lives lost in WWII. This is roughly equivalent to the current total population of Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, Utah and Nevada.

If a mammoth tornado were to swipe through the US from south to north, cutting the country in half, it would be a natural disaster of unprecedented proportions. It would be proclaimed by the populace as the hand of God. However, when the hand of man sets aside the Sixth Commandment and declares it constitutional to perform mass killings of indefensible children, the majority of the nation either applauds or remains silent.

Contrary to what many believe, when it comes to the Thou Shalt Nots, it is not the president, nor congress, that holds the last word. It is the Supreme Court of the United States of America that decides whether issues are constitutional.

Until the recent death of ultra-conservative Justice Antonin Scalia, the court was composed of four conservative and four liberal justices, with a “swing vote” in the middle (six Catholics and three Jews). The vote of this “swing” justice is predictably unpredictable—or maybe, unpredictably predictable. At times he votes with the liberal element of the court, and at times with the conservative. In really landmark cases, he quite predictably votes with the liberal justices.

Justices are political appointees, nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate, with lifetime tenures. In the past potential justices were examined for their juridical expertise and experience. In the last decades the emphasis has been on political orientation—liberal or conservative. Currently there has been an added dimension. Anyone reading the transcripts of Senate confirmation hearings for nominated justices knows that the political litmus test for confirmation is: “If confirmed, will you vote to have *Roe v. Wade* overthrown?” There follow questions on other social issues, including gay rights. When John Roberts, now Chief Justice, was nominated by a conservative president and questioned by a liberal Senate, he artfully dodged these questions by stating that standing decisions would not be changed. He was confirmed.

*Roe v. Wade* is more than a political issue. It is a moral issue. It is a criminal issue. Pared to the bones, it is: Are you for or against the legalized murder of innocent children? (If alive and on the Supreme Court, we know what King Herod’s vote would have been.)

Why discuss what appears to be a political issue?

The reason is simple and should not be ignored. When a nation enacts legislation not only to strike out Thou Shalt Nots existent from its founding, but increasingly attempts to make it obligatory to accept and fall in line with the transgression of the law of nature, things will never again be the same.

The hope that a moralist president could set the country on course again faces two serious obstacles: 1) It is increasingly difficult and improbable that another

Ronald Reagan will ever occupy the Oval Office, and 2) Should it happen, it would require an equally moralist legislature and judiciary to begin reversing the damage that has been done. The chances of this happening are roughly equivalent to that of driving a car for a hundred thousand miles without ever having to replace a single part.

Barring a national catastrophe, a massive terrorist attack, for example, that would shake the nation to the core, there is no light at the end of the tunnel—if indeed there is still a tunnel.

Will another nation arise to stand in the gap? It could happen, but I personally feel the chances are zero. This is the final countdown, not only for the United States, but for all nations. We paraphrase Luke 12:48. However, “unto nations to which much has been given, of them shall be much required.”

When the laws of the nation are synced with the natural Laws of God, any transgression of the Thou Shalt Nots is serious and subject to prosecution. However, when it is possible to obdurately transgress the Thou Shalt Nots of God *without* transgressing the laws of the nation, because they have been struck from the books, this, history teaches us, is the collapse of the tunnel.

When the light at the end of the tunnel no longer shines, or when the tunnel has collapsed, for the faithful there is another light. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

This is our consolation and only hope. ▲

## Thinking Out Loud

### Reasons and the Reason

Have you ever wondered why so many who moved to Brazil have moved back to the US? Or why some who were born here are moving back?

Randomly listed, here are some of the reasons:

**Better roads.** Much, much better roads. This goes all the way from farm roads to Interstates. To be able to drive a thousand kilometers without hitting a single pothole, the mowed, litter-free, roadsides, the road signs...well, only someone who has lived where none of this is true can understand how out-of-this-world it is.

**Better drivers.** It is hard to understand how a steering wheel can transform a gracious, vivacious people into reckless, irresponsible, speed demons, placing the lives of their fellows in jeopardy when on the road.

**Better stores.** The variety, quality and price of goods on display in stores in N America makes the majority of the countries in the world look quite backward, indeed at times, Neanderthalian. In all fairness it must be said that what stores in Brazil offer their customers is sufficient to have a very comfortable life. For those who are concerned with the perils of affluence, shopping in Brazil is a definite antidote.

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**Better service.** Buying a product in Brazil is sort of like marriage—for better or for worse. If the article purchased works, it's for better. If it doesn't, it's for worse. In the US the customer's word is gold. Here a guarantee usually means that it is guaranteed to take up to weeks to get the defective product fixed—if at all.

**Better bureaucratic efficiency.** Although things are getting better, bureaucracy still creates long lines that waste tens of thousands of man and woman hours daily. A person can get used to a lot of things, but standing in line an hour for something that should take a minute or two is hardly one of them.

**Better jobs.** Of everything mentioned, this is probably at the top of the list. Jobs, the kind of a job that permits a middle class life style, are rare in our part of the country. Someone who doesn't have financial or structural means to launch out on his own will be held to a restricted lifestyle. One of the greatest North American achievements is an economic formation that permits a prosperous middle class for those who work out for a living.

**“Better” language.** Not everyone appreciates foreign languages. Since English continues to be the language of preference for many who live on the Colony, the fresh air of English-Only lifts the spirits.

**Better interaction.** On a church level, there are of course many more congregations in N America than in Brazil. This creates a vigorous social interaction. Cheap and efficient transportation makes it possible to travel hundreds of miles for “quickie” social events.

**Better living near relatives.** Many of the Americans, or of American descent, have most of their relatives living in N America. Often this includes children and grandchildren. Even though frequent trips are made to visit them, the desire to live near them is strong.

**Better...** These are a few of the “reasons” to move back to N America. There are many others.

And now, my “reason” for living in Brazil.

**I love it here.** ▲

## In the Beginning

Yesterday at the headquarters of Brazil Foods (BRF – Known as Perdigão before the merger) I noticed an old ox cart on display. That brought back memories.

In the early seventies Pete Loewen and Reno Hibner purchased a large tract of land from a neighbor, Aristóteles Mesquita de Lima, known as Aristote.

Aristote and his wife Maria knew what it meant to live off the land. In their rare trips to town, about all they had to purchase for the kitchen were salt, sugar, and a few spices. Since they planted sugar cane, it is possible they even made their own sugar.

They planted rice by hand, which they hoed by hand, which they harvested by hand and which they hulled in a water-powered device called a “monjolo.” They planted their

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own beans. All this, plus an enormous vegetable garden that produced onions, garlic, lettuce, collards, and whatever you plant in a garden.

In their orchard, probably a half acre, there were...

Banana plants, at least six or eight varieties, which if combined with a large plot in a nearby pasture, there were probably a total of two or three hundred.

Citrus fruits, there were dozens and dozens of trees: a number of varieties of oranges, lemons, limes and tangerines.

There were jaboticaba, goiaba, cashew, papaya trees, plus coconut palms.

There were pineapple plants everywhere.

And so, there are rice, beans, bananas, fruit and garden stuff—no meat?

Before we continue our tour, let's remember they had no refrigeration of any kind, no gas stove, they did no canning. And yet there was always lots of meat on hand: pork, beef, chickens (jungle fowl), guineas, and of course, fish caught in a nearby stream.

Other than for the meat, most everything else was eaten fresh—except for the bananas which were cut and the hangars suspended from the rafter in a dark room to ripen.

To understand how meat was preserved we must describe the enormous kitchen “range,” a brick structure at least nine feet long and three feet deep, built against a kitchen wall. The middle section is the firebox with a cast iron plate a foot wide and three feet long running lengthwise. At one end is the *rabo do fogão* (tail of the stove), a three foot by three foot platform at the level of the bottom of the firebox. Pieces of wood up to four feet long can be positioned here and fed into the fire. At the other end of the firebox the stove continues upward for another three feet and tapers into a chimney. Set in the middle is an oven.

This stove releases a lot of heat and some smoke. Thus the area above the firebox becomes the perfect place to smoke meat... fish, sausage, strips of pork tenderloin and beef.

The fish are caught in the nearby river or stream, since back then all houses and accompanying buildings were built near running water. Usually they are eaten fresh.

Now comes the truly amazing technique for preserving meat. When we moved to Brazil I noticed that all “fazendeiros” had a lot of pigs running loose. They would roam the nearby woods and after an appropriate amount of time, show up with six or eight or ten large piglets trailing. Once they were developed enough to be weened, they would be placed in a large pen, maybe 50x50 meters, where they were fed mainly corn as they continued to grow until ready for the fattening pen.

The fattening pen was small enough to where there was almost no walking room. All table scraps, which were a lot, were fed to the pigs. Squash, manioc, among other things were cooked. This together with corn raised on the farm resulted in enormously fat hogs. When we first came to Brazil we would stare in amazement at hogs that could hardly walk, nor see because of the fat that reduced their eyes to slits. Then we would ask the most obvious question: “How much does that thing weigh?!”

The owner would look at us blankly, and then finally understanding what we wanted



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to know, would answer, “This pig will give three or four or five (20 liter) cans of lard. It must be understood that these were hogs bred and raised for lard, with meat as a side product.

We will remember that back those days there was no electricity on the fazendas (haciendas), thus no refrigeration. And yet there was always several varieties of meat on the table—sometimes up to four or five varieties. Lard, the sun and the previously described wood stove were the secret.

Before a cow could be butchered, a pig, or maybe two depending on the size, had to be butchered. The lard would be rendered in large vats and the cracklings removed.

Often, simultaneously, a cow was butchered. The meat from both the hog and the cow would be cut into chunks or ground and made into patties or meatballs. This meat would be put in the hot fat and cooked until all moisture was removed, which was then placed in the 20 liter cans and covered with hot lard.

Thus prepared, the meat would keep for four or five months. Since it was precooked, at mealtime all it took was a dipper with a long handle to retrieve the desired cuts, warm them up on the wood stove, and presto! in a matter of minutes the meat was ready to be eaten.

As can be imagined, sausage was always made from some of the pork, which was hung over the wood stove to smoke. Some of the beef and the pork were sliced into thin strips, salted and hung up to dry, either over the stove or on wires stretched out in the backyard for sun drying.

Well, I started out wanting to tell you about Aristote’s ox cart and really got sidetracked. In my book on our time in Brazil, there will be an entire chapter dedicated to the Brazilian kitchen with a lot of additional details.

An oxcart has no bearings and no moving parts other than for the wooden axle, some eight inches in diameter. It is held in place by a semicircular cut in the frame that fits over the axle. So when the cart is in motion there is constant friction of wood on wood that makes a haunting, indescribable sound that on a still morning or evening can be heard for several kilometers.

After the oxen—some six or eight—were yoked up, Aristote would take his place in front of the lead pair and lay one end of his six foot goad over the middle of the yoke. After all the proper ox-language commands, he would begin to walk, while holding the other end of the goad. Thus the goad, instead of being used to prod the oxen, would painlessly show the way.

At the place we lived near the BR060 highway for a number of years, part of our pasture ground was quite hilly. Some fairly large trees were cut down at the bottom of a steep hill and needed to be snaked up. My neighbor, seu Gerônimo, also had a team of oxen. One by one he dragged the trees up to the top. Needless to say, he didn’t use the cart for this; only a long chain attached to the yoke.

Why do I tell this? It gives a bit of a glimpse of life in Brazil when we first moved here nearly 50 years ago. Today on my chicken farm I have two tractors. I wouldn’t exchange them for oxen. I kind of wish though, that they would occasionally make the haunting noise of the old ox cart that no longer is. ▲

## **This & That**

**On May 29**, the prefix on all cell phones with a 64 area code, which includes Rio Verde, will be preceded by an additional 9. Thus my cell number 64 9900 0009, will become 64 99900 0009.

**The rainy season** is now over. Mud becomes dust. In our part of the country, the soybean harvest was relatively good, but later than usual. This means that the second crop of corn or sorghum was also planted later. Now that the rains have quite abruptly stopped, there is a good chance not many of these late crops will do anything. Unless, of course, we should get a few more rains.

**The Political situation** here in Brazil is in a state of turmoil. Sunday the Chamber of Deputies (the equivalent of the House of Representatives in the US) met to vote the beginning of impeachment proceedings against President Dilma Rousseff, which carried with more than the required two-thirds majority. The proceedings now go to the Senate, which with a simple majority vote remove the president from office for a 180 day period, during which evidence will be presented to the Senate to justify her removal from office. The actual impeachment vote must carry with a two-thirds majority, as in the Chamber of Deputies. In what could be a comedy of errors, were it not so serious, the vice-president, who is to assume the presidency should the house vote to impeach, is also under investigation, as is the president of the Chamber of Deputies, who conducted the impeachment proceedings. As in current American politics, the undisputed victors in all this are the media.. ▲

**This  
200th edition  
of  
BRAZIL NEWS  
which I am dedicating  
to our two grandchildren  
Sasha & Kayro**

**(children of Otávio & Leila Becker)**

Kayro, age three, has been diagnosed with Tay-Sachs, a degenerative disease with no known cure. The final diagnosis is dependant on tests to be done in the Sara Kubitshek Hospital in Brasília.

Sasha, Kayro's six year old sister, is just learning to read in school. She often spends time with us and I hear her sounding out letters and then trying to form them into a word. She hasn't learned to write, and yet the other day she found a piece of scrap paper and on the back side she drew a typical scene for a child her age.

But, in the upper left hand corner, she wrote, in her nascent script, "deus vai curar o kayro"—God will cure Kayro. In the middle of these words she wrote her own name.

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She had just one question for Faith. Should she write “curar” with a “c” or a “k”?

I have scanned her little work of art and printed it on the final page. You will notice that a bit of the printing on the other side has bled through.

She has no doubt that a miracle will be performed. If you also believe this is possible, please send a prayer heavenward.

And thank you for reading Brazil News. ▲

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