

Brazil News



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Editorial

Three Kingdoms and a State

It has been a popular belief that everybody and everything on earth could be classified as either holy or unholy, as good or evil, or more specifically, as either belonging to the kingdom of heaven or to the kingdom of this world.

In a very broad sense this is probably true, however it is an oversimplification of a reality that can leave us confused when we encounter circumstances that don't seem to fit into either kingdom.

Our new doctrine book speaks of a third kingdom, which we will here call the Natural Kingdom. This natural kingdom gives us a place to put the puzzle pieces that don't fit elsewhere. Before discussing the nature of this kingdom, we want to briefly review the Kingdom of Heaven, which we will call the Holy Kingdom, and the kingdom of Satan, which will be the Evil Kingdom.

The Holy Kingdom

Before the fall, Adam and Eve had no reason to pray, "Thy kingdom come..." for His kingdom was there. They were in it and of it, and enjoyed in perfection the benefits of the Holy Kingdom.

Man was created slightly lower than the angels, yet he was created with a curious advantage over both the heavenly and the fallen angels: he was given the power—indeed, the command—to multiply. Since man was pure, his seed was also pure. Had sin not entered, the earth would have been populated with holy beings. It was God's perfect plan that there be only one kingdom on earth: the Holy Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Evil

Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of porridge. Adam sold his for an unspecified fruit, thus corrupting himself and his own seed. This meant that his children, and

children's children..., would be born in sin. Satan grasped the opportunity and established his own kingdom, the Kingdom of Evil. Whereas his kingdom had been limited to a specified number, one third of the angels of heaven, it could now grow by claiming every soul ever to be born to woman.

It appears he believed his kingdom would supplant the Holy Kingdom.

The Natural Kingdom

For the plan of salvation, wrought before the foundation of the earth, to become a reality, there had to be a neutral ground. To thrust man out of the Garden directly into the gates of the Kingdom of Evil would have precluded any possibility of salvation. In fact, civilization would have been an utter impossibility under the rule of the one who has declared war on life and knows only how to kill, steal and destroy. Mankind would have plummeted into a savage, amoral existence.

Since not only salvation, but civilization itself was at stake, God directed Adam and Eve from the Garden to a natural kingdom, a neutral kingdom, in which both plants and animals, as well as mankind, would be programmed for propagation and survival.

(Ironically, it is this exact built-in code, one of the highlights of God's creation, that evolutionists are trying to unravel and present as proof that creation was a spontaneous chain of events spread over billions of years, and not a deliberate act of God.)

Meteorological patterns, the winds, the tides, seasons, the solar system, and the very universe, would function within the structure of natural laws established at the time of creation, which the Wiseman identifies as "time and chance." We will add a word and say "organized time and chance."

Before proceeding we insert that in spite of "time and chance," God, as Creator, has reserved the right to intervene in nature according to His own good will and pleasure. We believe, and know, that He respects sincere prayers and accordingly puts nature on manual pilot when and how He sees fit. Also, as recorded in the story of Job, He apparently at times permits Satan to upset the balance of nature.

We thank God for the blessings of nature. This is very proper. And yet, if rains come just at the right time during a growing season and there is a bumper crop, we don't believe that God measured out and determined the time for each rain. Conversely, if we have a crop failure because of lack of rain, we don't attribute it to the fact that the evil one got his hands on the faucets. Nor do we blame God for the unfavorable weather.

When there is a flood or a tornado, we don't believe that Satan has brought it on (although we know that indirectly he is responsible for everything undesirable). When a hawk swoops down and plucks up a rodent in its talons, we don't believe God instructed it to do so, and when the same hawk carries away one of our chickens, we don't attribute that to Satan. In both cases it was merely obeying a preprogrammed instinct.

Put succinctly, we don't believe that nature is an immense tug-of-war between good and evil. Rather, time and chance are ever present as pre-established laws are obeyed.

God knew that for mankind to survive in an orderly—or even haphazard—

way, in the natural kingdom, there would have to be a social order and principles of government, for many in this kingdom would not be children of the Most High. The basic constitution for this social and governmental order would have to function both in palaces and in igloos.

The first natural principle of social and governmental order is hierarchical or pyramidal, that a minority will lead and a majority will be led. Through the ages even the most primitive tribes lost in the middle of steaming jungles had their leader or chieftain. Villages and towns were run by a mayor and counselors. States and countries had kings, presidents or emperors at their head.

The second natural principal of social and governmental order is force. No matter how advanced or degenerate a society, those in rule must be armed with force. It is amazing how much common sense is generated by the shadow of force.

The third natural principal of social and governmental order is honor. Without this honor there would be no civic spirit. Men and women dedicate their lives to worthy causes thinking of the natural reward which society offers to achievers. Honor is the adrenaline that makes armies function.

The fourth natural principal of the natural kingdom is culture, which includes the arts: drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry, music, dancing... We readily condemn all this as worldly. Yet we must remember that in the Old Testament not only were the arts permitted, but also encouraged and cultivated to a high degree. Solomon's temple is an example of magnificent architecture. Sculptured objects were profusely used in worship; the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies was a sculptural marvel. David was both a poet laureate and an accomplished musician. He also danced and encouraged dancing. This teaches us that the arts are not part of the Evil Kingdom, for God would never have ordered their use in His kingdom, and especially the Holy of Holies if that were the case.

We talk about Christian nations and heathen nations. With the possible exception of Old Testament Israel, these terms are technically incorrect. For there to be a Christian nation, we would have to concede that God has committed government to His children. A heathen nation would have to be under the direct rule of Satan, thus part of his kingdom. Such nations don't exist, for all nations of the earth are part of the Natural Kingdom.

Yet in every nation of the world one senses either Christian or heathen influence—sometimes both. The United States was overshadowed by solid Christian principles when the founding fathers drew up the constitution. Even to this day its government is strongly influenced by Christian principles. Missionaries can tell of countries in which heathenism is an almost palpable presence.

We talk about civilized nations, as opposed to barbarous nations. Through the ages, the arts have been a reliable thermometer of the degree of civilization of any given nation. Peoples uninterested in the arts commonly give themselves to warmongering and debauchery.

The arts create a healthy (but not holy) environment for the natural man and result

in the nascence of cultural centers. Athens, Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Paris, St. Petersburg, were—or are—just a few of many cultural centers that have had a positive influence on civilization.

This brings us to a sensitive question: Are governments run exclusively by citizens of the Natural Kingdom? Or does God at times permit—or even call—citizens of the Holy Kingdom to take part in government? Does He permit His children to become at least somewhat involved in the cultural and social life of the Natural Kingdom?

These are questions we won't attempt to answer. Rather, we will zero in on something more important: the State within the Holy Kingdom.

The Holy Kingdom is composed of all the saved on the face of the earth. This Kingdom has no national boundaries, social restrictions or economical requirements, no compulsory church membership and no visible form. However, within this Kingdom there is a visible, literal State.

Not everything written in the New Testament has a direct application in the Kingdom. (A lone Christian won't give and take admonition, be subject to church discipline, partake of Communion, feet washing, etc.). However, everything, from Matthew chapter one to Revelation chapter 22, applies to the State—the Church.

The constitutions of most modern Christian orientated nations prohibit churches or religious groups from assuming direct control of the government, a principle known as separation of church and state.

It may come as a surprise that there is also a separation of Church and Holy Kingdom—but really, there is nothing surprising or innovative about this idea. Notice: There is no pulpit sharing between the Church and churches. There is no Communion or feet washing, even with those in the Kingdom whom we believe are saved. The Church makes no effort to discipline erring Kingdom Christians. Strong ties between Church members and Kingdom members are discouraged.

Why?

Very simple. Kingdom Christians are not surrounded by the same wall of doctrine as State Christians. This means that they at times partake of things, or become part of situations, that are off-limits to the State Christian. To not have fellowship with Kingdom Christians does in no way constitute a judgment of their salvation. Rather it is an admission of the mercy and longsuffering of God toward those of whom the Lord requires less due to their less than perfect understanding of the Word. These Christians are just as saved as State Christians and need the prayers of the Saints.

Kingdom Christians have a greater intimacy with the Natural Kingdom than State Christians. As we have already said, we are unable to determine to what extent God permits them to participate in governmental and cultural activities.

We do know, however, that the Bible clearly teaches that we must be *in* the Natural Kingdom, but not *of* the Natural Kingdom. We understand this to mean that while government and the arts are not of Satan, they are off-limits for State Christians. More precisely, to the State Christian they are sin.

Why the difference? If everyone is going to the same place, why can't the rules be

the same? Maybe it would be more enjoyable to be a Kingdom Christian than a State Christian.

Alas, there may be those State Christians, who if offered Kingdom status, would snap up the chance.

There was a reason why God closed up loopholes and pulled the strings tighter for State Christians. He knew that the faith once delivered to the saints could only be preserved in a controlled environment. The door into the church isn't wide enough for the arts. This fact is self-evident as we see nominal Christianity in a freefall and Kingdom Christians in a desperate, lonely fight for survival.

By now some of you good readers are possibly somewhat bewildered by our frequent references to the arts: drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry, music, dancing...

To avoid confusion, let's take a quick look at the arts.

The drawing and painting is the kind done by amateur or professional artists and then displayed for public viewing, or for commercial purposes. In some cases photography has been elevated to an art.

Sculpture is self-explanatory.

In the arts, architecture doesn't refer to normal plans for building a house or a shed. It is construction in which special attention is paid to aesthetics and fine detail. The constructions of Frank Lloyd Wright fit into this category.

In the arts, poetry is written for public acclamation; an expression of the natural man, as opposed to religious poetry, which is an expression of the inner man.

Music. Both vocal and instrumental music, any kind of refined music intended to elicit public applause. Symphony orchestras are a prime example.

Dancing. This refers especially to professional dancers who perform for the public.

In a word, the arts are an expression of natural impulses for the purpose of entertaining and eliciting public applause.

Any questions as to why the arts can't squeeze through the door of the Church?

But wait!

We have said that the arts, for the State Christian, are sin, even though there may be a certain tolerance for Kingdom Christians. If for the State Christian they are sin, then surely the ruler of the Evil Kingdom would love to see them inside the Church.

Without a doubt he would. But he knows that State Christians are solidly fortified against the arts. Past efforts to introduce the arts have proved futile. So he has settled on an alternate plan. Forget about the natural arts and let State Christians set up their own art program, even their own arts. Let them establish their own cultural centers...

A brilliant idea, even if it comes from the archenemy of the State. Instead of attempting to squeeze the arts from the Natural Kingdom through the narrow gate of the State, why not have these same Christians set up their own arts program internally?

How does it work? Let's look at several examples:

Architecture. During a visit to the US, we stopped at a minister's house for a short visit. He has been to Brazil for revivals and other church business, so we hoped to

spend a bit of time with him and his wife. It happened he wasn't home, but his wife insisted we come in anyway.

The house was an old wooden structure, hardly qualifying as a work of art. When we walked through the front door, what a jumble we encountered. The young children had everything topsy-turvy. It immediately became evident they were having the time of their life. No, no, they weren't misbehaving, just enjoying life in their own house. The minister's wife wasn't embarrassed. I suspect that wasn't the first, nor the last time, the house looked like that.

To this day I get a good, warm sensation when I think of that scene. First of all, the happiness of that family didn't depend on a fancy house. Secondly, I didn't see knickknack shelves, and you name it, loaded with trinkets that would shatter if an errant ball or Teddy bear came whizzing through the air (which I suspect happened on a fairly regular basis). What I saw there was a *houme* (house + home) in which happiness took precedence over elegance.

There are also houses—architectural marvels—in which everything has been planned to the last detail. Invisible “Parents, please keep your children on a leash” signs sprout everywhere. Such a house is too elegant to be a home. It is a house, only a house, to be displayed, to be admired...

These architectural marvels are often a self-awarded prize for many years of hard work (and sometimes not so many), thus precious. An architectural triumph. A house.

Music and poetry. Music, pure music, is a poetical prayer. It is the most sublime form of communication between God and man, between brothers and sisters in the Lord. Even as man's praises and petitions are rising, God bounces His message back from heaven, comforting, encouraging, reproofing, convicting, according to the need of each heart.

Musical instruments are totally incapable of establishing the type of communication just described. Proof of this is in the fact that the apostolic church has never in its two thousand year history accepted instrumental music for private or collective adoration. The evil one knows that to push for State acceptance of musical instruments is a lost cause.

We believe that singing in the early church and during the time of the martyrs sounded different than today's singing. First of all, there were no songbooks. Since all singing was by heart, there must have been variations of words and in the tune from one congregation to another, even from one home to another. Secondly, it appears there was no four-voice singing until recent centuries.

Today's singing surely sounds much different from that of the Church of the centuries. In fact, those of you readers born in the earlier part of the last century can tell of a distinct difference from then to now. Even I, born toward the middle of the last century, clearly remember my grandmother singing German as she sat rocking in the evening. It sounded different.

The fact that singing today sounds different isn't necessarily good or bad. The important thing is that the singing—then or now—be a means of bi-directional communication between God and man, a poetical prayer.

The church rejects choir singing in normal worship services and frowns on solo singing. The reason is that more emphasis is often placed on perfection than on conviction, it tends to elevate man more than God. All too often it isn't a bi-directional communication between God and man, but merely horizontal between man and man.

In the Natural Kingdom the arts entertain and stimulate the natural man. In the Church anything elevated to an art does the same.

It is proper to sing for enjoyment. It's one of the joys of Christian living. Yet, some questions need to be asked.

How much emphasis can be placed on perfection before singing becomes an art?

Can an excessive emphasis on perfection create a situation in which those with less than perfect voices begin hiding in the shadows?

With the rapid proliferation of gospel songs by both Church and other writers, do we find that special occasions require new songs, like a new dress on Easter?

Songs are becoming more complex, more "challenging," if you will. Only the "best" are capable of handling some of them. Is this good?

Is the altar of the Lord being contaminated by shallow, trendy songs with little or no spiritual substance?

There are songs with repeating that create "solo" effects for the different voices. Would this fit into the definition of a poetical prayer?

There is a shift in our C.E. programs to more songs, with possibly only one short talk. Does this trend reflect a changing of values?

As you finish reading this article, don't stop thinking. We haven't mentioned all the natural arts, nor have we touched on all the arts that are possibly spawning within the Church.

A sincere effort is being made to keep the Kingdom of Evil from invading the State. We do the same with the Natural Kingdom, although it seems less serious. The problem is more in those things that God permits in the Holy Kingdom, but not in His State, for reasons already given.

The children of Israel were at times asked to tear down idols and groves in their land. Maybe God would like for His children to tear down some art centers within the State. ▲

A Brazilian Story

by Mário de Moraes

A Miracle on the Bank of the Solimões River

[Before listening to Mário's story, a few comments are in order. We read about religious shrines that draw large crowds of worshippers because of some miracle that is supposed to have occurred at that place. If the truth were known, how many would be founded on something similar to this story?

The Solimões is a large tributary of the Amazon River.]

This took place around 1930 in the Municipality of Lábrea...on the right bank of the Solimões River. It was here that a man nicknamed Resto de Onça [Remains of a Leopard] got lost in the jungle. He got this nickname because of a bloody fight that he had with a spotted leopard. When the people saw the dead leopard, they gave him this nickname.

Even though he was a first-class woodsman, on this particular occasion Resto de Onça got helplessly lost in the jungle.

For several days he tried to find his way back to civilization, but this time he was sure enough lost.

Because of the abundance of wild fruit and crystal streams, he never went without food or water. But with each passing day he became more desperate. It almost seemed like a curse. It was absolutely unthinkable that a veteran woodsman would get lost in the jungle just like a tenderfoot.

On the afternoon of the sixth day the woodsman stumbled onto a small clearing. A quick look around told him that this was an old rubber extraction camp, abandoned many years ago. He looked around hoping to find an old trail that would take him back to civilization.

All that he found was an old grave with a decaying wooden cross. By careful examination he was able to make out the name carved in the wood:

Pantaleão

Religiously inclined, Resto de Onça cleared the underbrush from around the cross to make it more presentable. With a vine he tied the horizontal piece in place to make sure it wouldn't come tumbling down. With things looking better, Resto de Onça knelt down, placed his hands on the cross and called upon the soul of the deceased, asking for deliverance.

Not only did Resto de Onça pray for help, but he also made a vow. If the deceased would hear his prayer and show him the way back to civilization, every year he would return to this spot with a good supply of candles and light them in honor of his benefactor.

Resto de Onça hadn't even finished his prayer when he spotted a dog in the clearing. It seemed to be watching him from a distance. It was an ordinary mutt, but even that was reason for great rejoicing. The fact that a dog was near meant that man wasn't too far away.



He called the dog, but instead of coming, it struck out through the jungle, with Resto de Onça hot on its trail. After they had gone a long way, the woodsman spotted a rubber extractor's tent just ahead. Exactly at that moment the dog disappeared, never to be seen again.

The rubber extractor gave Resto de Onça a hearty

welcome, but assured him that he owned no dog. That really made no difference to the woodsman. The next day both of the men returned to Pantaleão's grave, where Resto de Onça again knelt and expressed his gratitude for the help received.

Exactly a year later Resto de Onça invited a number of his friends to accompany him on his pilgrimage. Carrying boxes of candles and imitation flowers, he paid the first installment of his vow.

News of what happened spread like wildfire and soon people were coming to Pantaleão's grave. It was decided to build a shrine on the bank of the Solimões River. The shrine, a chapel, was finished in record time. Once again Resto de Onça invited his friends for his yearly pilgrimage, when the mortal remains of the deceased, presumably a rubber extractor, would be transferred to the shrine along the river.

That's when it happened. The shallow grave was opened and there, only several palms beneath the soil, they found the remains of... that's right, of a dog!

Most likely a mutt. ▲

Agricultural Economy

Crisis, Only in the Dictionary

Some years ago Nely Caixeta, executive editor for EXAME Magazine (circulation: 240,000) did a cover story on the influence foreigners were having on agriculture in the Rio Verde area, which was translated and published in a previous issue. Caixeta has done another cover story on agriculture, this on a national level, but zeroing in especially on the Rio Verde area.

Those of us who know Caixeta personally consider her to be a "Mennonite" journalist, because of the way her interpretation of news coincides with ours. Following are loosely translated excerpts from her article:

Danger of inflation abroad, brownouts internally, a wobbly Argentine economy, terrorist attacks in New York and war in Afghanistan. With so many things capable of upsetting the Brazilian economy, it's hard to believe what is actually happening out in the country. Farmers, ranchers and related industries haven't only managed to hold their own in this time of international crisis, but doing much more. What they are doing is nothing less than brilliant: record yields, industrial technological advances, new markets and an increase in exports.

Take meat as an example. Since the beginning of the year, record export sales are constantly being broken by even higher figures. According to the Department of External Commerce and Development, from January to September of this year over 2.1 billion dollars have been exported, up 50% from the same period last year. What is responsible for this increase? The ability of Brazilian producers to rapidly exploit the voids created in Europe and other parts of the world by a new outbreak of the mad cow disease and hoof and mouth disease.

If red meat was a problem, then give them white meat. Overnight, chicken

flew to the top of the list of exports, breaking all records. For the first time over a billion dollars worth of fryers were exported. During the first nine months of this year, exports reached 993 million dollars, an increase of 62% in relation to the same period last year. Brazilian pork also hit the jackpot on the external market. Sales more than doubled, from 111 million dollars to 253 million dollars, from January to September. Hesitant markets, like Russia, are now an important part of Brazil's exports... Even beef exports have been doing well, hitting the 522 million dollar mark during the first nine months of this year, an increase of 34% over the same period last year. Sales should surpass the 800 million mark by the end of the year.

A few weeks ago the first rains of the season got farmers into the fields in the Rio Verde area, a town of 150 thousand inhabitants in the southeast part of the state of Goiás—one of the top soybean producing regions in Brazil... This year farmers should finally hit the elusive goal of one hundred million (metric) tonnes of grain. The past harvest produced 98.2 million tonnes, which resulted in the export of five billion dollars worth of soybeans, a record, except for 1997, when prices rocketed because of poor yields in the US.

In Ribeirão Preto, in the western part of the state of São Paulo, there is the largest concentration of sugar producing factories in the world. From January to June, 4.4 million tonnes of sugar exported brought in 973.2 million dollars, a 56.6% increase over the same period last year.

Seldom has so much good news come at one time...

The soybeans, sugar, alcohol, coffee and orange juice produced in Brazil are the most competitive in the world. Let's look at soybeans. Farmers like Ilisar Ivanoff, from Rio Verde, are accepting a challenge that has almost become an obsession among soybean producers—to constantly increase the yields per hectare. A Russian Orthodox who has lived in Goiás for 30 years, Ivanoff is coming up with some amazing results—3,450 kilos per hectare, against the national average of 2,600 kilos. In the last 10 years, yields per hectare have increased 71%. In the state of Mato Grosso the per hectare production is increasing at the rate of 4% per year. “Because of this we are able to compete with soybean growers in the US who are subsidized by the government,” is how Blairo Maggi, the largest soybean raiser in Brazil, puts it.

On Maggi's farms the average yield is 3,200 kilos per hectare, as opposed to the US average last year of 2,524 kilos per hectare. “By the end of this decade we want to be producing 4,200 kilos per hectare,” Maggi says.

Colonial Brazil was made up largely of Portuguese, a commercial people with little aptitude for farming. It wasn't until a blood transfusion took place, when old-time *goianos*—natives of Goiás—began selling their large, unproductive properties to people from southern Brazil, descendents of Germans and Italians, that Rio Verde started turning green.

Until this transfusion took place, people farmed the Banco do Brasil, and not their

land. Crop loans were instantly transformed into new diesel pickups, or simply lived up, with but a small part of the money being invested in the soil.

The easy credit of those days is no longer available. This in itself has eliminated most of the locals. Increasingly, farmers are getting their financing from the large soybean buyers.

European blood and Brazilian climate are a mighty force...

According to Júlio Cardoso de Lucena, president of Seara, Brazil produces the best quality chickens in the world for the lowest cost. Beside the ready availability of corn and soybeans, other factors help to make both chickens and hogs the most competitive on the market. “We have good genetic stock, a mild climate that doesn’t require expensive installations, as well as a lot of operations run by the family. In Europe producers manage to survive only because of the subsidies they receive.”

It is said here that a chicken is nothing more than soybeans with wings. Hog production is favored by an abundance of corn. Décio Bruxel, a 52 year old *gaúcho*—a native of the state of Rio Grande do Sul—has farms in six different municipalities. The corn he raises is used to fatten 106 thousand hogs a year.

In the state of Mato Grosso, Carrol’s Food, the largest pork producing conglomerate in the world, is setting up in the municipality of Diamantino, 200 km. north of Cuiabá, the largest hog raising operation in the world. When in full operation, there will be 54 thousand brood sows...

Carrefour, the French supermarket conglomerate is embarking on a novel project on their ranches totaling 32,000 hectares in the state of Mato Grosso, (one hectare equals 2.5 acres). As of next year, all their cattle will be “vegetarian.” No antibiotics, wormers or toxic products will be used. When it becomes necessary to medicate the animals, homeopathic drugs will be used. They feel that there will be a market for this type of meat in Europe.

The minister of agriculture believes that within three years Brazil will be the number one meat exporter in the world.

Caixeta gives a brief history of two successful farmers in the Rio Verde area: Ilisar Ivanoff, already mentioned, and Eduardo Ribeiro Ralston. Ilisar, a Russian, is well known by some of the Mennonites over here. Let’s listen to what Caixeta has to say about them:

People who walk the streets of Rio Verde, a city of 150 thousand inhabitants, sooner or later are likely to get the impression they are seeing an old movie. Until two years ago, Ilisar would have fit into this description. He had a long beard and wore the type of clothes traditionally used by his people. He is a member of a small community of Orthodox Russians that came to Rio Verde in the early seventies. Like their American neighbors, the Mennonites—the men also wear long beards and the women ankle length dresses—they came to the area to farm. Some 80 years

ago the Ivanoff family moved from Russia to China to get away from the Bolshevik revolution.

When Mao Tsé-tung came into power in 1949, the Ivanoff family decided to move to Brazil. They wanted as much distance as possible from China and a place where the Communists would probably never take over. They chose the town of Ponta Grossa, in the southern state of Paraná, where they planted soybeans, wheat and barley. Today Ivanoff, his four brothers and a niece plant 8,000 hectares in Montividiu, near Rio Verde. This year they harvested 460,000 sacks (1,012,000 bushels) of soybeans. Their average yield is extremely high, in the neighborhood of 3,450 kilos per hectare, with a record average of 4,440 kilos per hectare. Not even the best farmers in Mato Grosso dream of such yields.

How do they come up with such yields? “Dedication and advanced technology,” is Ivanoff’s answer, who constantly incorporates the very latest technology available in Brazil. “We were the first ones in the area to lime our ground, to plant soybeans and to go to no-till planting”, as he drives over his land in his pickup...

Separated, with six children, Ivanoff invests in the very latest equipment. In a large shed near his house there are a number of the latest model tractors and combines. Not very long ago he invested approximately 150 thousand dollars in a sprayer that will save him the expense of aerial spraying.

Ivanoff has a special hankering for modern and expensive equipment. He can be seen driving around on farm roads in a Porsche. Does being a farmer make him a rich man? He says it does...

Ivanoff wants to move to the distant state of Rondônia and start over. He has the typically itchy feet of a born pioneer. “I want to start all over,” he says. “I like to turn a difficult situation into an easy situation.”

Now comes a story entitled “A Different Kind of King.”

With a hat that makes him look like Indiana Jones, Eduardo Ribeiro Ralston, 53, bounces around in a pickup while he rides range on his vast holdings in Rio Verde, in southeast Goiás. His four-wheel drive pickup takes us over terraces and then comes to a stop at a pasture where the grass is greener. With a degree in social sciences from the University of São Paulo, Ralston now points toward the lush pasture. “Do you see the difference?” he asks. “It was barely a week ago that we spread compost on that pasture.” The compost he is talking about is a mixture of water and manure from the more than 40 hog and chicken barns on his place. “This is a fertilizer that has all the nutrients that a pasture needs,” he says.

That which is a problem for hog and chicken raisers in Europe, with their tiny farms, for Ralston is a solution. “Since I need to continually improve my pastures, the manure from my barns is a fabulous fertilizer, and best of all, it’s free.”

Ralston was raised on a sugarcane and orange plantation in the town of Terra Roxa, in the interior of the state of São Paulo. He has lived in Rio Verde since 1977. On his

3,000 hectares ranch he raises 3,000 head of cattle, an industrial cross between nelore and caracu. He also has an 80 hectare rubber plantation. A little over a year ago, cattle and rubber were the only source of income on the farm. Today Ralston is raising 20,000 hogs and half a million fryers for Perdigão. Part of this project he donated to friends in exchange for the manure. He is optimistic. Greener pastures mean more pounds of meat going to market, which means more money. Usually to make more money it's necessary to spend more. "It's a paradox," he says, "but in my case I will make more and spend less."

Ralston's total investment with Perdigão has been two million dollars, which he received as a loan from a development fund. He sums up his investment by saying, "I invested two million dollars to become the Cattle King, but I'll end up being the Manure King of the area."

Only time will tell if Nely Caixeta is right when she says that in the agricultural field the word crisis is found only in the dictionary. Keep tuned. ▲

Life in Japan

by Marilsa Akemi Nakayama

Life Before Japan

From the time I was six years old until I turned 13, I sold my mom's baked goods on the streets. I clearly remember how I would have to rush to sell all the rolls and still get to school on time. Because of our constant struggle for survival, some of my childhood dreams never came true. The only thing we knew for sure was that if we didn't all pitch in and work, we simply wouldn't have any food to eat.

I remember how my mom struggled to take care of all of us. She would get up in the wee hours of the morning and make rolls so that we could hit the streets at the break of day. Needless to say, we got up real early too. We didn't complain, first of all because we felt our responsibility, and secondly because it wasn't a good idea to complain to my mom. Today as I look back I understand her no-nonsense attitude.

When it gets cold in Rio Verde, the thermometer may not drop so low, but the cold goes right through to the bones. When we had to get up on these cold, cold morning, it was really rough. We managed to get through these times because of charitable souls who would take pity and give us clothes.

Sometimes I wonder if winters were really colder back then, or if it was that we didn't have money to buy appropriate clothes that made us feel the cold so much more. I only know that winter was a special trial to me. I have no idea how many times as we went from house to house selling our wares, we would at times stay on someone's porch just a little longer, trying to warm up our legs and hands. Some people would see what was happening and invite me and my little brother in to

warm up a bit. Even today when it starts to get cold, a certain depression wants to take hold of me.

That's the dark side of the story. On the other hand, we were active children and loved to play. We were quite noisy and rambunctious. I never had much use for dolls. I found it a lot more interesting to climb trees and run races with my brothers.

Seeing what a difficult childhood we were having, my mom insisted we get an education. In school I always tried to be a good student, although I was never what you would call brilliant. The sacrifice we had to make to be able to study makes me appreciate the education I got.

Even though I studied hard and got good grades, by no means was I a model student. The hard life at home made me rebellious and I was a troublemaker in school. I dreaded the parent/teacher meetings, because the teacher usually got me in trouble with my mom. The story was always the same: I studied hard, but was aggressive with the other students. My aggressiveness wasn't physical, but verbal. I detested horseplay and jokes. The fact that I was of Japanese descent often made me the butt of their jokes.

My mom never actually gave me a thrashing after the parent/teacher meetings, but I did hear plenty of sermons. She would tell me I should be nice and kind like the other children, but I never managed to tell her why I acted like I did.

As I got older, I became more aggressive with others. If I could have understood why I was that way, I'm sure things would have been different. ▲

Intercepted Letter

The Missionary

[My brother-in-law, John Burns, sent his mother, Mrs. Emma Burns, a letter, telling about some time he and his wife, Dorothy, spent in El Salvador doing disaster relief work. An incident on their flight back to the US caught my attention.]

It seems traveling has resumed. The airport was FULL. They went through our handbags, but no problem. We left on time. The man that sat by me was not in a talking mood. We had breakfast on the plane. I slept some and wrote in my diary. It was 11:30 when we arrived in Houston. We had to collect our bags and check them in again. We didn't have to open them, but we had to have all our shoes disinfected. Our next flight left at 3:30 p.m., we had time to kill. We got a snack and a paper and sat in the food court. On the little train car there was a group of people from Tennessee.

From Houston to Nashville Dorothy and I couldn't sit together, but that was okay, as we both had very good visits with those beside us. The lady by Dorothy told her she had not flown since September 11, and was fearful, but she was very glad to have Dorothy beside her. Did she sense she was a Christian and feel comforted?

The man I sat beside was from Hendersonville, Tennessee; the lady was from

Vancouver Island and was going to Dickson, to her brother's funeral. When I mentioned we had been missionaries to El Salvador, she said, "That is a coincidence, as I am a missionary also!"

We discussed many things and she read a number of tracts I had given her.

Her brother was flying a small plane out of Centerville and crashed and was killed. She was going to the funeral in Dickson. She asked me if I had any suggestions for scriptures suitable for a eulogy at the funeral. I suggested Numbers 23:10. She had to look in the index to find Numbers.

Later she was looking in the Old Testament for Timothy and had to use the index to find St. John. Anyway, we had a little Bible Study. She works with prostitutes and girls on drugs. She was very impressed with our tracts and would like an order blank or tracts.... ▲

This & That

A reader brought me several copies of US NEWS & WORLD REPORT. I was pleasantly surprised to notice that it has retained its high editorial standards over the years.

TIME Magazine has made a comeback after years of decline. Its coverage of recent events has been excellent.

Laurie, Calvin & Donna Hibner's daughter is back after spending a number of months in Canada.

Larry and Stanton Giesbrechts from Manitoba spent several weeks here.

We have at different times made comments about Dr. Donald Gordon, the founder of the Evangelical Hospital in Rio Verde. Dr. Gordon and his wife, Helena moved to Rio Verde in the 40s. I have often referred to them as the Mennonite's John the Baptist. Their extreme dedication in an almost exclusively Catholic community melted prejudices and enemies. Back when I had my store, most of the priests and nuns were my customers. Some became good friends and would come in just to chat. Two of Dr. Gordon's daughters were here for a short visit when a chapel was dedicated on the hospital grounds. They also came to one of our church services. We owe much to Dr. and Mrs. Gordon.

Nov. 1 is Memorial Day in Brazil.

Sérgio & Katrina Alves had a boy, Kelson Tiago, on Nov. 5.

A Perdígão hatchery in southern Brazil was totally destroyed by fire. The hatchery here in Rio Verde has been upped to full production and chicks are being trucked south, a more or less 30-hour drive.

Hallis & Marcia Silva had a boy, Lennis, on Nov. 8.

We don't have tornadoes and hurricanes and earthquakes in Brazil. At least we're not supposed to have. Sometimes one wonders. Every now and then we have some fantastically strong winds that do a lot of damage in a small area. On the 17th, one of these winds zeroed in on the place Paul Yoder bought from Sid Schmidt. The wind totally destroyed the roof in the large machine shed, blew over the steel water tower,

the transformer pole and a number of large trees in the yard. The wind came with hail and a driving rain.

We have changed our Thanksgiving day to the traditional date in November. When we first moved here, Brazilians didn't celebrate Thanksgiving (Even today it is on a limited basis). Since our harvest is from February to May, we celebrated Thanksgiving exactly six months later—or earlier, depending on how you look at it. Darla Nichols from the Pipestone Cong. spent several weeks on the Colony. Stuart & Linda Miner and family are spending a week in Brazil.

Every now and then someone's vehicle is stolen. The last ones to suffer this misfortune were Harley & Adriana Penner. They were in Goiânia shopping for furniture. When they came out of the store, they found their pickup had disappeared. Since most of these thefts are the work of highly organized gangs, the chances of the Police finding the stolen vehicle are quite slim.

The Brazilian soccer team, that has taken the World Cup on four different occasions, just barely was classified to play in the coming World Cup games. The present team is hardly a shadow of what it was back in the days when Pelé was king. This is a serious blow on national honor.

Luís Fernandes, the dentist from the Pirenópolis congregation, is moving his equipment out on December 3. Shortly he should be open for business. You folks from the US may want to consider having your dental work done here in Brazil. It will be a big saving.

Facts & Figures

Temperatures

High	34°C	93°F
Low	17°C	63°F
Av high	30°C	87°F
Av low	21°C	69°F

Rainfall

241.5 mm — 9.5 inches

Relative Humidity

Hi 88% — Low 62% — Av 80%

Exchange Rate

One US dollar buys 2.5 reals

Last month this figure was 2.8. It's not likely it will go much below the 2.5 mark. Farmers hope it won't. The higher it stays, the better the price of soybeans.