

Brazil News



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Editorial

The Evening and the Morning Were the Sixth Day

“The evening and the morning...” If these words weren’t repeated six times in the first chapter of Genesis, we would be tempted to believe that somewhere through the centuries a scribe got things mixed up. “The morning and the evening...” to us is a much better way to describe a day.

To understand this “strange” way of saying things, we can take a clue from the Jewish Sabbath, which was from evening to evening, and not from morning to morning, or to be more exact, from midnight to midnight, as is universal today. As used in Genesis, evening represents the night and morning the day. In the absence of clocks (even a sundial doesn’t work at night), to separate one day from another at sunset makes a lot of sense.

Really that is sort of beside the point. And yet it isn’t. Darkness (evening) symbolizes ignorance or despair; light (morning), enlightenment and hope. The prophet Isaiah supports this thought when he says that “the people that walked in darkness [the evening] have seen a great light [the morning]...upon them hath the light shined.”

We are coming to the close of the sixth day (millennium) in the history of mankind. If time continues and we live, we will soon find ourselves in the seventh day—the day of rest (at least by the calendar). A thousand years ago mankind was leaving the fifth day and entering into the sixth day. We want to notice what Thieleman J. van Braght, the compiler of the *Martyrs Mirror* has to say about this period of time:

The thousandth year [the fifth day] is finished; we have come to the years that follow it; which time is called the eleventh century. We will wander through it in our thoughts, and investigate how it then stood with the true church of God...

A simile of the moonlight and the stars, which shine most in the darkest nights, forms the beginning of our account, representing the condition of this time...

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Even as the shining moon and the glittering stars give the most light, and adorn the blue expanse of heaven the most gloriously, in the darkest nights, so it was also after A.D. 1000, as regards spiritual matters, which concern the honor of God and the salvation of the souls of men. For, about the year 1000, as well as many years before and after but particularly then, the world lay sunken, as it were, in an arctic, six-month's night, through the thick, and palpable darkness, which had arisen, with heavy vapors of superstitions, from the Roman pit. Yet, notwithstanding the state of the times, some undefiled persons, as bright heavenly signs, and stars, began to shine forth the more, and to let their light of evangelical truth illuminate the dark nights of papal error. Yea, some, like the polar star, served as a sign to sail by; I mean, to accomplish safely and in a godly manner, through the turbulent waves of perverted worship and human inventions, the journey to the heavenly fatherland. Others, like the morningstar, or the lovely, blushing Aurora, announced the approaching day; we mean, they pointed to the true day of Christian and evangelical worship of God, and revealed it, as much as they were able, to those who sat in the darkness of error.

We will no longer speak by simile; what we mean is this: That there were men in those dark times, who maintained God's truth, in various points, according to the needs of that time, and bore witness to and sealed it not only with the mouth, but with the deed, yea, with their blood and death.

This time which Thieleman describes puts us on the tail end of the Dark Ages, a time when war, disease and famine were never very far away, when people lived an average of only 30 years. (Extremely high infant mortality rates brought this average down. Needless to say, there were those, not many, who lived to a ripe old age.) Fewer than 20 percent of the population traveled more than 10 miles from their birthplace during their entire lifetime. The printing press had not yet been invented and the most of the population was illiterate. Even the most enlightened scientists considered the earth to be flat. When in the year 1613 Galileo, a Catholic, defended the Copernican theory in writing, he was summoned to Rome to answer to the inquisitors (possibly the same ones whom the martyr brethren had to face) for his heretical views that the planets revolve around the sun. He was cleared of the charges of heresy and ordered to keep mum on the subject. When some years later he again defended the theory that the sun is the center of the universe, he was disciplined by the church and sentenced to life imprisonment, which, because of his age and poor health, he was permitted to serve under house arrest.

This was a time in which there were no automobiles, no hospitals, no banks, no shopping centers, no telephones, no trains or airplanes, no modern conveniences. Men were totally unaware of the existence of the North and South American continents, of Australia and the many islands.

Truly this was a dark time. As the *Martyrs Mirror* painfully shows us, there was no respect for human dignity or life. Culturally, religiously and scientifically the world was in darkness.

At approximately the year 1500, which is also considered to be the end of the Middle Ages (not to be confused with the Dark Ages), things began to change. Portugal and Spain were the ruling powers of the day. Their ships—caravels and galleons—began

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to ply the unknown seas in quest of riches. Christopher Columbus stumbled onto the North American Continent (never mind modern theories of the Vikings, etc.). A few years later, in 1500 to be exact, Pedro Álvares Cabral set foot on the South American Continent. During the 1530's the first Portuguese settlers arrived in Brazil. In the year 1620 the Pilgrims established a permanent Colony in the United States. Thus in a period of slightly over a hundred years two enormous continents were discovered and settled.

During the 1500's Johannes Gutenberg invented the first moveable metallic type printing press, which made it possible for the Bible to be produced commercially and made available to the masses.

In 1698, Thomas Savery, an Englishman, patented the first practical steam engine, which gave way to trains and ships propelled by steam, as well as a host of other utilities.

During the 1700's the industrial revolution sprang up in England and in the early 1800's spread to the European mainland and North America. *Revolution* is a particularly apt word to describe what happened, for truly it revolutionized every aspect of life. Instead of an artisan painstakingly making muskets from scratch (lock, stock and barrel, literally), each a bit different from the other, many workers became involved, making *identical and interchangeable* parts. If the stock broke on one of these mass produced muskets, instead of going back to a gunsmith who would find a piece of walnut and custom make a replacement, the customer could go to a shop specializing in arms, ask to have the stock replaced, and in less than an hour walk out with a functioning musket. Henry Ford applied this same principle to cars.

Thieleman J. van Braght compares the beginning of the sixth day with the six-month Arctic night. The second half, and especially the last two centuries, of the sixth day, can justifiably be compared to the long Arctic day. There has been more scientific progress in the year 1999 alone, than there was during the first five millennia of world history. When the Bible declares that in the end time "knowledge shall be increased," we could very safely say that "knowledge shall be increased *exponentially*." The evidence is right before our eyes. And we have only seen the tip of the iceberg—or shall we say, of the *computerberg*.

Economically more and more households are rising above the poverty level and enjoying at least limited comforts of life. Rudimentary medical care is available to most of humanity.

In spite of much publicized crime rates, the world today is a much safer place to live than it was 500 or a thousand years ago. Human rights, even though frequently taken to nauseous extremes, have still had a very positive effect on humanity.

The light has never shown brighter than today (remember that we are analyzing the situation "from the other side of the fence"). A thousand years ago how many Bibles were there in the world? We can only guess, but the number was very, very low. Today there are hundreds of millions of Bibles in print in all major languages, as well as in many tribal dialects. With the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the door to literature distribution

and mission work has opened to most of the countries of the world. Today the problem isn't finding open doors, but rather workers to walk through them. With illiteracy being a monster in extinction, very little of the literature sent out is discarded because no one can read it.

Churches of every description are appearing on every street corner. Yes, the majority of them are obviously popping flies over the backstop and calling them homeruns, but the word read by impure lips is the Pure Word of God. The Bible which their adherents carry with them is the Pure Word of God. Mixed in with questionable literature, there is often enough truth to where the seeking soul will realize he must look upward, and if he is sincere, the light will shine.

The evening and the morning were the sixth day. We are in that morning, in the six month Arctic day. There is light everywhere.

And that's what this article is all about.

Light is like an ice cream cone. Hand someone an ice cream cone and unless he eats it quickly, it oozes away into a sticky mess. Light cannot be put into a freezer and then thawed in a microwave at "a convenient season." Light—heavenly light—can neither be manufactured nor placed in cold storage. It must be used while it shines.

Today this light is shining in the far corners of the world. We believe that God is freeing himself on all men, and for this He is using TV, the radio, the Web, false prophets and churches.

It is in this sense that we are in a time of unparalleled light. We are coming to the end of the Arctic day and now we see a brilliant flash, the aurora borealis in all its splendor...

That would make a beautiful ending to this article, but alas, it would be most misleading.

Light and judgement are never far apart. When God sends light, he also sends judgement. If what we have just said is true, that never has more of the earth been covered by light than today, then what kind of judgement is awaiting the millions and millions of souls who have received, *and rejected*, the light? We speak of those who have received the "ice cream cone" of truth, nibbled at it just a bit, and then let it drip to the ground, or worse, tossed it to the ground where it was trodden underfoot. A mother punishes her child who wastes a fifty cent ice cream cone. How much more will the Eternal Judge punish those to whom the light was handed, only to let it melt away? When he permitted His Son to hang on the cross and saw His life blood drip to the earth, the doom was doubly sealed for all those who would deliberately permit the truth and the light to drip to the earth and trample it underfoot.

Today, as the six working days of creation come to an end, in the brilliant light of the morning, the world is looking to better times. And better times there could be—indeed what a revival!—if the light which has shown over the face of the globe would penetrate the heart. But that isn't the case. Everywhere we look we see dripping ice cream cones. We see "Christian" nations wallowing around in discarded cones. Will God not judge this most terrible sin which is being committed? And speedily? ▲

Lessons from the Past

by Wilmer Unruh

(Continued)

Life in C.P.S. Camp

One of the privations the boys complained about was our diet. Towards the end of the war protein foods like meat and cheese were getting more scarce and high priced, and the M.C.C. being strapped more and more because of their limited budget, had to substitute a lot of things. Even so we didn't suffer all that much. Nobody really suffered the pangs of hunger or showed signs of malnutrition. About the worst thing that happened to us was that we ate a lot of peanut butter sandwiches and maybe now and then a platter of fried brains.

Well this man became more curious and asked, "What do you get from your church as pay for your time?"

I told him they paid for our room and board, plus five dollars a month for clothes and spending money."

Did he ever scoff at that. "There ain't no way you can make ends meet on that," he said. "No wonder you're hitch hiking."

By this time I think I had his sympathy aroused toward me and he was thinking that I was another victim of the system. It was getting toward morning and he said, "I'm hungry, let's eat breakfast."

I agreed, as I was really hungry, not having had anything to eat or drink since noon lunch the day before on the project. We came upon a roadside diner and he pulled in. We both walked in like two buddies, sat up to the counter and ordered a full breakfast, the whole works. While we were eating he leaned over, looked at my plate and said, "Boy! You're eating pretty good on five dollars a month, aren't you?"

"Well," I said, "my mom sends me a few dollars now and then and I save it for things like this."

Pretty soon the waitress put our checks down and we were through eating. He leaned over again and said, "There's no way you can eat like that on five dollars a month." He grabbed my check and went and paid the whole bill.

Soon we were back on the road. It was about another 50 miles home and he got right friendly and told me about his predicament. His wife, who was from England, was home alone and was very lonely. She wanted to go back home to England, and here he was a thousand miles from home. He could hardly take it any more.

Now it was my turn to feel sorry for him. We were getting close to home and then we hit a detour that took us farther from my home, so I had to walk the last four miles. When I got off we wished each other good luck and he said if I ever got down to the lower Rio Grande to look him up. The strange part about this whole episode was that I never asked him his name and he never asked me mine. I've wondered many times what happened to him.

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I walked the last four miles and got home about 9:30. I walked in unannounced. Mom was in the kitchen and she turned around and saw me and asked, “How in the world did you get home?”

I just shrugged and said, “I hitch hiked home.”

“You what?!”

“I hitch hiked,” I said.

She slapped her thigh and said to my dad, who was in the other room, “Dad, now we’ve got a bum in the family!”

It was kind of funny, but the important thing was that I was home. I took a nap and then we had dinner. Our Swiss Mennonite neighbor came over to see if he could have one of the boys to help him haul bales that afternoon, so I went and helped him haul bales that afternoon. He was very interested in my trip home and asked me, “Did you tell him about your service and that you were a C.O.?”

I said yes and told him all about it. He commended me for it and encouraged me to never be ashamed of what we stand for.

Saturday evening was my big night. I got to go and see Evadean. This was the first time I met her family. She had three married sisters already with some children and they were all home. They were very interested in my trip home and a little amazed and flabbergasted at what happened to me. But toward the end of the evening, one of them turned to me with a grin and said, “It seems like you’re already part of our family.” That made me feel accepted and it was worth the trip home.

Sunday morning I went to church and in the evening there was some kind of a special meeting, so we stayed for that. I had arranged for the driver who was to take me back to meet me at about 10 o’clock, some 15 miles from our farm, but when we got there, he was no where around. In another 30 minutes he showed up.

When we got back to our camp in Nebraska it was three or four o’clock in the morning. At 6 o’clock the breakfast bell went off and of course there was no alternative but to get up and head to the dining hall.

I’ve written this weekend experience more in detail to show the present generation that things didn’t always come so easy in our generation and to what lengths we had to go sometimes just to see those we love for just a few hours. Today things come so easy to us because of our material abundance and our mobility that I wonder sometimes whether we appreciate all the good things we have.

This happened in the summer of 1946. That fall, towards the first of October, I was discharged and I came home for good. I would’ve liked to have gotten married then, but I didn’t have any money, nor a place to live—that is, no farm, and back then you didn’t usually get married unless you had a farm. So I got a job in the Moundridge flour mill on the night shift. This is where I probably met my greatest test. I worked right beside a returned veteran. He was a person who had seen action and faced the bullets, as he said, and for some reason he was terribly embittered against anyone who shirked his patriotic duty and especially the C.O.’s and he never missed an opportunity to take a swipe at me or try to intimidate me when he found out I had

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been in the C.P.S. camps. I packed flour and he packed bran and we'd help each other load the box cars at night.

One night we were loading the center of a car and he was standing in the door way. I threw 50 pound sacks at him and he'd catch them and stack them up in the car. He made some kind of an unkind remark about me and without thinking I said something that made it appear like I was defending myself. This enraged him something awful and he stood there in the door way and brandished his fists at me. He said, "You just wait; some day we'll make you sorry you ever lived."

I think he meant all of us "no good parasites," and by "we," he could have meant his organization, because rumor had it that he belonged to an organization that was working to overthrow some of our freedoms in this land. I became so scared of this man that I started to have nightmares about him and it was always the picture of him standing there in the door of that box car and ready to clobber me. It really tested my resolve to keep this job, but I hung on till spring when the farm became available where I now live.

This experience had some real value to me later. I thought I had completely forgotten about it and it was completely out of my mind, but many years later when the Gulf war started and it looked like the U.S. was again getting embroiled in a real war, a lot of these memories from W.W. II came back and one night I had this very same nightmare about this guy standing in the door of that box car and he was ready to clobber me. This proved to me that these things are never erased from your memory, but probably are stored deep in one's subconscious and when the right conditions come about they come to the surface. And I think it gave me a little taste of what some of these veterans went through when they had these recurring nightmares of the terrible things they went through in the war.

In this respect I want to tell you about a certain friend I had in my youth. He and I were the same age. At 15 years of age we both got converted in the big revival that happened at the Lone Tree Church in the winter of 1938-39. We were both baptized on the same evening. We continued to be friends through our upper teenage years, sometimes talking about what we wanted to be and do when the time came to strike out on our own.

The war came along and things began to really heat up by 1942 and it looked like we would all be drafted. The church leaders became very concerned about how to keep its young men faithful in the keeping of our anabaptist teaching on non-resistance, so one time they called a meeting at the Lone Tree church for all the young men in draft age here in central Kansas. The church was about full of young men. Min. F. H. Wenger was the main speaker. He gave us a very sobering speech. This man was given to plain speech and he didn't mince words. He told us what we could be in for. At this time the U.S. was already building up a tremendous and formidable naval might, for they believed that whoever controlled the seas would win the war.

I clearly remember Min. F. H. Wenger behind the podium with a newspaper clipping in his hand, reading what a certain U.S. Senator had written as an open warning to

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our enemies, like Germany and Japan, who were probably over-confident in their own naval forces. This Senator made this statement, “that any[one] who steps on our toes will find himself at the bottom of the ocean sooner or later.” This illustrated the resolve the U.S. had and how that they were in this war to win because they believed in the righteousness and justice of our cause. And then he also quoted a certain General who had already seen a lot of action and simply had said that “war is hell.” This was supposed to give us young men a picture of what war really was so we would be realistic about it and not be taken in by the glamour and glory of it. I think it had a sobering effect on a lot of us.

After this the draft started in earnest and the quotas got bigger and bigger and my friend and I were soon both in the draft. But for some reason he was not able to face the idea of going as a C.O. So he was drafted into the army and then our paths separated and our lives took different courses. (What I’m writing now I gathered from later.) He ended up in the South Pacific Islands as the U.S. was starting to recapture the string of islands that led to the Philippines and to Japan—islands that they had captured by their conquest earlier. As they would advance from island to island through the steamy, rat-infested jungles, it began to be a real test of survival and sometimes the only thing that kept them going was the hope that they would get out alive and get to come home again.

Then there were the terrible bouts with malaria that racked their bodies and sapped their strength. But the greatest fear and one that tore them apart mentally and emotionally was the constant threat of a sniper hid in a tree top somewhere and ready to take a potshot at them. He survived all of this and finally came home after the war, where he recuperated his health so that he could get married and he had a few children. But he was always plagued with recurring bouts of malaria, as well as the terrible nightmares of what happened back there in those jungles of the South Sea Islands. It seemed that all this finally drove him to drink in an effort to forget and he became an alcoholic.

After a while his wife couldn’t cope with it any more, so she left him and took the children. That plunged him deeper into hopelessness and despair. As time went on he became a hopeless addict. By this time he was living alone and had a little repair shop in our hometown. He was good at fixing things and I would stop in once in a while when I had something to fix, for we were still friends and often there was no one in there and then we would talk. He would tell me some of these things. But there always seemed to be somewhat of an apologetic air about him, as if he wished things could have been different.

When he got to be in his early fifties, he began to have serious health problems and he finally ended up in the hospital. It was soon evident that he was terminal. One day I went to visit him. Again he was alone and it was very quiet in his room. He seemed to be humble and contrite, but he still had this air about him that he wished it would have been different. But in his debilitated condition, mentally and physically, I don’t think he could grasp that God really loved us and that He holds out forgiveness,

salvation and deliverance to all. But rather his spirit and attitude was like the publican in the temple: Lord be merciful to me a sinner. My heart went out to him and I believe if there was ever a man who deserved to have the mercy of God upon him, I believe it was this man, and I rather believe it happened. What a tragic example this is of what war does to people. When wars are over nations will count their casualties and talk about the many fine men they lost. But this man was surely also a casualty, only he suffered a lot longer and wasn't counted. How sad, for he was my friend. ▲

The C.O.

You readers who have teenage children, ask them if they know what a C.O. is. It would be interesting if someone would do a bit of research and find out if the younger generation is aware of the hardships and ridicule some of our brethren had to endure because of their non-resistant stand. These men left the comforts and security of home and were thrust into a totally strange, often hostile, environment. They spent two, three, four, or even more years working hard in exchange for room and board.

For these young men, 1-W service meant dropping future financial plans, it could mean pushing up marriage for the duration of the war, or, as happened with my dad-in-law, who unexpectedly got his notice nine days before getting married. They were married and a few days later he took the train west, leaving his bride behind. Some farm boys found themselves in mental institutions doing menial tasks, taking care of those who couldn't take care of themselves—not a pleasant task, to say the very least.

There were those who entered the service as young men and were released some years later as strong, mature men. But not all. Some came out weakened. Some fell by the wayside. The church's spiritual casualty rate was probably about the same as the army's, and much more so when we take into consideration those who saw greater glamour in the uniform than in the cross and either left the church or decided not to join in order to fulfil their dream.

We don't want to indiscriminately scare our young people with war stories, and yet maybe they should know a bit more about the terrors of war. Even though it wasn't easy to be a C.O., what they had to put up with didn't even begin to compare with what frontline soldiers had to suffer in foxholes in subzero weather. Our young people need to feel a deep gratitude toward the government for the exemption it has granted to those whose faith doesn't permit them to bear arms.

Our youth should feel a deep respect for those families who gave their sons and brothers for the cause of freedom. In fact, they should treat *everyone* with a deep respect, for what an ignobility it is for a Christian, a C.O. who doesn't believe in going to war, to leave a questionable witness to someone who has suffered such a great loss.

I am sure that many of you readers have appreciated the clear message that has come through in Wilmer's article. I would like to personally, and in the name of all of you readers who were inspired by his words, thank Wilmer for sharing with us.

Doubtlessly there are others who could tell inspiring stories about the time spent in 1-W service during the war. I encourage you to put your experiences on paper. If you yourself don't feel able, ask your son or daughter, your wife, or some friend, to be your scribe as you dictate. We desperately need to awaken within our younger generation an awareness of what it means to be a non-resistant Christian.

It's true that there may never be another draft. We aren't non-resistant to avoid the draft, but rather because this important doctrine should be an integral part of our life. ▲

Brazilian Stories

by José Cardoso

The Man Who Called Upon the Devil

[José Cardoso is a printer by trade, but could be described better as a jack-of-all-trades. Not only does he print, but sets up and does maintenance on presses and other equipment found in print shops. He is an excellent builder and is almost single handedly building his own house. He used to drive truck between Goiânia and Brasília, has done farm work... In a few words, if he sees something that needs to be done, he does it. He is a real asset to the Rio Verde Congregation.

Some time ago he told me this story and I asked him to write it down. Today he came to work and handed it to me.]

I have a friend who is the owner of a print shop. Sometimes he asks me to do maintenance on his machines. One of his presses was giving him so much trouble that he decided to trade it on another, which he did, but it didn't work any better.

I had been noticing something for quite some time, so one day I waited until all his workers left, and then I said to him, "I'd like to tell you something. The problem you're having isn't with your press, but with the devil."

This really shook the man up and he said, "That's not the truth!"

I told him, "Your problem is that all day long, every time something doesn't go well, you swear and use the name of the devil."

He had an argument for that. "I say my prayers every night before going to bed; I believe in God, so how can that be?"

I told him, "What good does it do for you to pray to God at night and start calling on the devil the first thing the next morning? Here's what is happening: You call upon the devil; he hears you and blinds your eyes. He blindfolds you so that you can't see what the problem is on your press, and so naturally you can't fix it."

The man's wife and daughter happened to be listening in and they immediately agreed with what I was saying. The man hung his head and mumbled, "That's a bunch of baloney."

I asked the man, "What good does it do to go through all of your little rituals and say the rosary if you don't cleanse your mouth of the name of the devil?" Then I left.

The following evening he called me. We talked for a while and I asked him how his day had gone. He said that every time he had a problem with one of his machines, he remembered what I had told him and that about that quick he was able to see the solution to the problem.

I tried to encourage him again to quit calling upon the name of the devil, to be more patient and to pray earnestly so that he could become a real Christian.

Sometime later I went to Goiânia with this man and his wife. During the course of our conversation, she told of a fight she had had with some other woman. I asked her if she had gone back and asked for forgiveness. She very emphatically told me that of course she hadn't done any such a thing. Her husband had been listening in silence, but now he commented, "You know, José, if you keep on like this you're going to end up converting me."

I hadn't gone to the man's print shop for a while, so this afternoon I stopped by. His wife told me, "José, you need to come here more often. If you stay away too long my husband starts getting into the habit of swearing again."

I would like to ask you readers to remember this man and his wife in your prayers. ▲

by Sylvia Baize

School Memories

Our schoolhouse was a very primitive affair with stick walls that had been daubed with mud, but what a place full of good times!

We sometimes packed a lunch, but mostly I remember we would hike out to Clifford Warkentin's hired man's house for a delicious, down-to-earth meal cooked on a wood stove. Some of the other students who didn't have this privilege and had to get by on a sandwich or cold lunch always looked so envious when I rode away on my bike for my hot meal.

Then one day it all changed. Our parents decided everyone should have a good hot lunch, so each day Lucas and I took a kettle of beans, someone else took a kettle of rice, or meat or vegetables or a salad. I think we rotated each week on what we took. All I know is that it was good.

We each had a plate with our name written on the bottom and at dinnertime we would find our plate, get in line and file past the stove where all the kettles were with the delicious hot food. Then we would go outside and eat our dinners—segregated, with the girls going to one spot and the boys to another. The teacher usually headed out to where the boys were sitting, because they were really an ornery bunch.

The truth of the matter is that we girls were just as ornery, but we knew how to hide it better. Occasionally she would come sit with us, and talk about some angelic little girls...

Since our teacher didn't understand Portuguese, we had it made. Anything we didn't

want her to understand, we just said in Portuguese, except, of course, when she ate lunch –with us. Then we would only speak English.

One day at lunch time a tramp stopped at school and asked for something to eat. We had plenty of food, but only enough plates to go around. Each one of us knew we should offer him our plate, but we didn't, for several reasons.

First of all, the man was so filthy we could almost see the germs crawling all over him. We were sure that if we let him use our plate, we would never get all the germs off. Secondly, each student was thinking about what he or she would have to put up with from the other students from then on. So—and this certainly isn't to our credit—not one of us would let the tramp eat out of our personal plate. The teacher begged us to do so, to no avail. (Why didn't she let him use *her* plate?) The impasse was broken when she hopped on her bike, went to the neighbors and borrowed an old plate. Finally the poor man got his lunch. I can't prove it, but I believe that plate was never used again.

Then the weather turned exceptionally cold for Brazil, so cold, in fact, that most of the palm tree leaves were killed by the frost. As you can imagine, our stick school was cold, cold... Someone installed a barrel stove in school, which helped some, at least for those who were near the stove. Girls wore jeans or pajama bottoms under their dresses to keep warm. Boys are tougher and didn't have to go to extremes like we girls to keep warm. At recess we girls were allowed to remain indoors and play with our dolls. Oh, what fun!

Our teacher believed in the old-fashioned method of punishment and would rap a student's hand for certain transgressions. I remember so well one of the students who had the obnoxious habit of making hideous faces at the teacher when she had her back turned to him. The rest of us would watch out of the corner of our eye and do our best to keep sober. Suspecting that something was going on, the teacher would suddenly turn around, but in the twinkling of an eye the offending student had his face cleaned up and was diligently studying his lesson.

But one day she was too quick for Mr. Smarty and caught him right in the middle of one of his horrible grimaces. The offense was worthy of the rod, which she applied with vigor to his outstretched hand. He didn't flinch. She asked if it hadn't hurt and he bravely said that no, it hadn't.

So she repeated the dose, this time a little harder. No, he said, it still didn't hurt. Everything was deathly quiet in the classroom. There were several more applications of the rod, each one a bit harder, but no, it still didn't hurt. Feeling it was enough, the teacher called it good.

It was here the unexpected happened. Our hero, who had so bravely endured his chastisement, couldn't keep the tears from trickling down his cheeks. We cornered him after school and asked if it had hurt after all. He stoutly maintained it hadn't hurt, but that he had cried because he was so mad. We other students didn't believe him, but he stuck to his story.

Would you believe that after that this student still managed a few grimaces when the teacher's face was turned. The rest of us, out of loyalty, acted like we didn't see anything. I have many times felt sorry for our teacher. She had a mighty wild bunch of students to put up with. If she wouldn't have been so strict, we would have just run over her. ▲

Monkeys

Zip and Zap

Yep, those two little monkeys we're raising have been named. The male is Zip and the female is Zap. Watching these "nonhuman primate mammals" (AHD) grow up is an educational experience. Because of their human resemblance, it's inevitable that one will end up making some comparisons. Just for example...

Have you ever tried to eat a ripe mango? They're delicious, that is if you overlook the fact that they are usually stringy, squishy, sticky and slippery. So when children eat mangos off the cob, they usually end up with their faces all smeared up. So do ladies. And so do gentlemen, except that if they have a beard, due to the law of gravity a certain percent of the juice trickles down, makes the beard stringy, squishy, sticky and slippery.

On I.Q. tests, human beings normally score somewhat higher than nonhuman primate mammals. There are a number of reasons for this, one of which is that humans make up the tests, which means they obviously use self-serving criteria (which in itself is a sign of a substantial I.Q.) But if man ever permits primates to set some of the standards for I.Q. tests, he may learn a thing or two.

The other day my son Otávio decided to serve Zip and Zap some ripe mango. He went under the tree where they spend most of their time and called them. Quicker than you can shake a stick, they swung down to a branch just above his head. He offered them each a piece of mango...

OK, let's get set for the I.Q. test, this one prepared by a monkey with a PhD in primate intelligence. First he gives a full grown man a mango, who promptly proceeds to smear his face and beard all up, all the while thinking, "I wonder what a hairy monkey would look like after eating one of these things."

Now let's watch Zip and Zap. Remember they're not even three months old and have spent very little time around other monkeys. When they see Otávio offering them pieces of mango, they both wrap their tails around the branch on which they're sitting, drop the rest of their body down, upside down (obviously), and their little hands reach out for their portion and start eating. Where does the excess juice go? Onto their face? Into their beards (yep, they both have beards)? Naw... It all drips down to the ground, as they daintily eat away.

But, like we have said, humans don't put that kind of stuff on the I.Q. tests they make.

Still thinking down this same vein, suppose that someday you are invited to a monkey wedding. (Don't laugh. I read about weddings and hear about human weddings out in the world that are so absolutely ridiculous that they would hardly qualify as a monkey wedding.) Even in our weddings you know what a mess the reception can end up being. There are always too many people invited, so the tables have to be squished together in loooong rows with hardly any space to walk between them. The folding

chairs are jammed up against each other. So when you try to pull one out, a half dozen (three on either side) try to come along. It's really bad when everyone finally manages to get seated and then you have to get up. (Children score much higher on this I.Q. test. They enter and exit between the seat and back of the chair, without having to move it, something most adults find inappropriate.)

And then, along side each plate there is a napkin that can be used to sop up spilled tea or wipe the corners of the mouth at frequent intervals. That's the system, so that's the way we do it.

Back to the monkey wedding. There's not a single chair. Not one. Kind of bad for humans, but not for monks. Up on the ceiling there are parallel bars, running the length of the tables. The glasses have straws in them. No napkins beside the plates.

Now the monkeys begin filing in. They go to their place, give a quick jump, catch their place on the bar with their tail, and hang over their plate, just like Zip and Zap. They sip their drinks and daintily eat their food. The aisles are wide open. No chairs bumping and scraping.

Practical, if you ask me. But alas, for anatomical reasons, we humans shall spend the rest of our lives sitting on folding chairs.

So much for that. You'll remember the half grown monkey we were taking care of. It had been mistreated and never did really tame down. After some time we left it out of its cage and it lived in a tree in front of the house. The macaw took it under its wing and they got along famously. One day toward evening it heard the call of the wild and left. Recently it was seen several miles from here, so apparently it has adapted to the wild OK.

Stay tuned in for more monkey business next month. ▲

This & That

In terms of visitors, November has been a good month: Frank & Doreen Mininger and family; Stuart Mininger; Alma Martin and granddaughter, Teresa Unruh; Robert & Amy Holdeman and children, Randy and Bonnie; Darren & Ramona Schultz and family; Tom Lehman; Joe Martin.

A few have traveled to the US: Betty, Mrs. Jake Loewen, to spend a month with her daughter Karen, Mrs. Errol Redger; Linda, Mrs. Daniel Holdeman, to spend a month with her daughter Karla, Mrs. Kent Holdeman. Daniel headed that direction several weeks later to pick up his wife. (Aw Daniel, she planned on coming back...)

The Dean Penner's short term on the Curitiba mission in southern Brazil came to an end, so Mark & Glenda Loewen and son Victor left on Nov 11 to spend a week with them before they left, and then spend another month there. The reports from there are encouraging. Roberto Amorim has probably finished doctrinal classes by now. As we have mentioned before, Curitiba is a very progressive city. There is a latent feeling here that someday there will be a Holdeman Mennonite settlement there. There is a

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feeling we should try and reach the many Mennonites who live in the city and outlying areas.

Elias Stoltzfus is holding revival meetings in a congregation in Mississippi.

On Nov 21, Jeff, son of Daniel & Anna Kramer, and Marion, daughter of John & Joan Unruh, were married in the Monte Alegre Congregation. Different ones were out from the Mato Grosso settlement for the occasion.

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