

Ocampo, Julián

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Julián Ocampo, regarded as the first Adventist pastor in Chile, was previously a tinsmith of Methodist confession who accepted Adventism in the north of the country.¹

Little information about the life of Julián Ocampo has survived, though it is known that his first contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Church occurred during a tour by the literature evangelist Frederick W. Bishop (1864-1929) through northern Chile. Bishop had traveled to Iquique and took the train to the interior pampas with the idea of finding English-speaking immigrants in Huará and Saltpeters in the area. When he didn't find any English-speakers to buy his books, he decided to offer Ellen G. White's book *Patriarcas y profetas* (Patriarchs and Prophets), the only one he had in Spanish. Unable to speak Spanish himself, he would show potential customers the illustrations in the book. One hot Friday afternoon, he went to a tinsmith shop where he offered the book.

By the aid of gestures, the tinsmith, Ocampo, directed him to where the Methodist missionary Vidaurre was preaching to a group of people. Vidaurre knew Bishop and had bought books from him a month earlier in Valparaíso. Through Pastor Vidaurre, who could interpret, Bishop was able to present the book and sell six copies. Ocampo invited Bishop to rest that night at his house. The next morning, they said goodbye to Vidaurre at the railroad station. When Ocampo wanted to know what Bishop would do that day, the canvasser showed him from his Bible about the seventh day of the week as one of rest. Ocampo searched the Sabbath texts in the Bible and asked Bishop to write them down. The tinsmith studied the long list of verses and started to consider observing the Sabbath.

Frederick Bishop continued his work on Sunday. When the Methodists who met with Ocampo arrived for worship, the tinsmith shared with them the Sabbath verses, and they discussed the topic. As a result, Julian Ocampo and others accepted Adventist doctrines. The group included Juan Sebastián Pereira, Mariano Zúñiga, Manuel Alcayaga, who along with Julián Ocampo, would be the first converts in Huará. Thus, Adventism began in northern Chile. Granville H. Baber (1852-1936) baptized Ocampo. The other members of the group would have important roles in spreading the Adventist message during subsequent years. The country's first Adventist congregation organized in Iquique with Julián Ocampo as its pastor.

On December 13, 1896, pastors G. H. Baber (1852-1936) and Enrique Balada went to Iquique where they conducted a baptism in the Pacific Ocean and ordained Julian Ocampo, a former Methodist lay preacher, to the Adventist ministry. Thus, Ocampo became the first pastor ordained by the Adventist Church in Chile.² However,

he only served for two years, because of his premature death. An educational foundation in the Chile Union Mission has memorialized Julián Ocampo's name since 2016.³

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Héctor J. Pevevini, *En las huellas de la Providencia* [In the Footsteps to the Providence] (Buenos Aires: South America Spanish Publishing House, 1988), 49. Leopoldo Zambra Ríos, *No con ejército, no con fuerza, sino con su Espíritu* [Not with army, not with force, but with His Spirit] (Santiago, Chile: Adventist Book Center, 1994), 39, 40, 53.
2. Daniel Oscar Plenc, *25 Historias de misioneros* [25 Stories of Missionaries] (Buenos Aires: South America Spanish Publishing House, 2013), 22.
3. See: "Primeiro Concilio de Educación de la Asociación Sur Austral" [First Council of Education of the Southern Austral Conference]. In: <https://noticias.adventistas.org/es/noticia/educacion/1er-concilio-educacion-asach/>, accessed August 14, 2018.

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