

Pérez Marcio, Braulio (1904–1974)



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Braulio Pérez Marcio was a pastor, educator, lecturer, writer, poet, and the founder and director of the international radio program *Voice of Prophecy* in Spanish for more than 30 years.¹

Braulio Pérez Marcio

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Early Life, Conversion, and Studies

Braulio Francisco Pérez Marcio was born in March 26, 1904, in the small town of Morille, province of Salamanca, Spain. His father, Manuel Franciso Pérez, was born on September 28, 1875, in Morille, Salamanca, Spain, in a family with limited resources. At age 20 he was called for military service and sent to fight in Cuba.² On his return he met Camila Marcio, born on August 11, 1878, in Villarino de los Aires, Salamanca, Spain. Manuel (27 years old) and Camila (24 years old) married on November 15, 1902. Manuel moved to Argentina in 1906 or 1907, and a while later his family moved too. On May 26, 1907, his second son, Felipe Esmeraldo, was born, and on April 1, 1910, Manuel was born. The youngest daughter, Isabel, was born in 1914 and died of meningitis in 1920 at age six.³

Camila had her first contact with Adventists in 1921. She was invited by some neighbors to Bible meetings and continued to attend the church in Florida, Buenos Aires. These meetings gave her comfort and a new relationship with God. Until then her husband, Manuel, was a declared agnostic. Braulio was a 17-year-old student, studious and skeptical. Since the age of ten he had done humble cleaning tasks, errands and selling candy in a movie theater. He worked in a drugstore, while becoming a great agnostic reader. At first he did not want to participate in these meetings, although he later accompanied his brothers to the church. There he was

impressed with the preaching of the Adventist writer Marcelo I. Fayard (1894–1966). Luis Rojas Ayala invited him to his house to talk and to study the Bible. Marcelo Fayard and Luis Rojas had moments of prayer with him, after which he gladly decided to be a Christian. Braulio completed high school in 1918. Meanwhile the missionary Ole Oppegard took care of Manuel Pérez, explained the biblical prophecies, and lent him the book *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen G. White. Manuel read it in a few days and began attending church with his family. In 1921 Manuel and Braulio were baptized; a little later Camila and the other two children. Because of the Sabbath, Manuel quit his job and decided to go canvassing. Braulio left the drugstore to go canvassing with his father for three years.

In 1925, at age 21, Braulio went to study at River Plate Academy, in Entre Ríos, Argentina. During the school year he worked as a proofreader for the literature teacher Esther N. Peverini (from Alberro) and in the summers he went canvassing. He cultivated the art of writing articles and chronicles as editor and then director of *La Voz del Colegio* (1927–1929).⁴ At that time he began writing poetry. In 1930 he graduated from the ministerial course at River Plate Academy. For the occasion he composed a poem entitled “Excelsior.” Manuel F. Pérez Marcio, Braulio’s brother, also graduated from the ministerial course (1933) at River Plate Academy.⁵

Felisa Juana García, Braulio Pérez Marcio’s wife, was born in Cáceres province, Spain, on March 8, 1908, she was the daughter of Sotero García Gómez (1876–1952) and María Esteban González (1881–1973). The humble family emigrated to Argentina between 1912 and 1920, and settled in Pehuajó, Buenos Aires province. Sotero became acquainted with Adventism by reading *El atalaya* [The Watchtower] and other books; by the visit of the canvasser Colino Sabino Gregorio; and by the testimony of Luis and Magdalena Gambetta, of Miguel Cané, La Pampa, Argentina. In Santa Rosa, La Pampa, Sotero became a canvasser of the American Bible Society. In 1924 they moved to the neighborhood of Villa Urquiza, Buenos Aires, where they joined the Adventist Church. Both Sotero and his daughters Sotera and Felisa went canvassing. In 1925 Sotero, his wife, María, and his daughters were baptized in the church of Florida, Buenos Aires, by Luis Rojas Ayala. In 1926 both daughters went to study in River Plate Academy. Sotera García (1909–1990) married Héctor J. Peverini (1906–1983) in 1929. Sotera was the mother of Milton Peverini García, successor of Braulio Pérez Marcio in *La Voz de la Esperanza* [Voice of Hope] and Tulio N. Peverini.⁶

Marriage, Family, and First Works

Braulio and Felisa met in River Plate Academy. They married on January 19, 1931, in Junín, Buenos Aires province, in a ceremony officiated by Pedro M. Brouchy (1893–1969), president of Buenos Aires Conference.

Between 1931 and 1935 Braulio worked as dean of the male dorm at River Plate Academy in the time of director Jess S. Marshall. He was also a teacher of history, Bible, Spanish, and literature before devoting himself to his great vocation as an evangelist and communicator through the radio program *La Voz de la Esperanza* [Voice of

Hope]. Felisa graduated in 1932, also at River Plate Academy. In 1936 Braulio and Felisa continued working at the Inter-American Division. They worked at the Central American College of Costa Rica, where Braulio was a male dean and a language and literature teacher. Felisa organized the first primary school. Braulio had a radio program, and every summer he conducted evangelizing conferences. In 1937 his daughter Eunice Isabel was born. She studied at River Plate Academy and married Atilio R. Dupertuis in 1961.⁷ In 1939 Braulio was called to Panama as a pastor and evangelist. In 1940 he was ordained as a pastor. In 1940 Braulio and Felisa in the West Cuba Conference, where Braulio was a pastor and an evangelist. In 1941 he directed a cycle of conferences in La Habana and in Holguín, Cuba. In 1942 he started a radio Bible school program, which offered lessons prepared by him.

La Voz de la Esperanza

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, California, the United States, H. M. S. Richards (1894–1985) began the Adventist radio work (1929). In 1937 the program was named *Voice of Prophecy* with the performance of the King's Heralds and later of the soloist Del Delker. The General Conference decided in 1942 to begin the program in Spanish.⁸ On September 6, 1942, it was decided the lecturer should be Braulio Pérez Marcio (38 years old). This program began broadcasting on January 3, 1943, with topics translated from English. Braulio Pérez Marcio adapted the material and added illustrations and poetry. Two or three years later he had prepared his messages converted into a Latin mentality. The quartet Los Heraldos del Rey sang in Spanish (Braulio taught them the right pronunciation). During the first 12 years the program was called *La Voz de la Profecía* [Voice of Prophecy], and in 1954 it received the name *La Voz de la Esperanza* (Voice of Hope). It lasted 30 minutes. The radio postal school offered distance courses as Universal Course, Youth Course, Child Course, and Life Treasures, and handed out diplomas to the students who finished them. The missionary mail carriers were members of the church who subscribed to the courses and took the lessons every week.

From 1945 to 1948 Braulio Pérez Marcio lived in Argentina. He traveled to Glendale, California, United States, for about three months each year to record programs and attend the office. Soon they settled in Glendale. On May 31, 1946, his second son, Rolando Ariel Pérez, was born.⁹

The trips of Braulio Pérez Marcio and Los Heraldos del Rey started in 1957. They visited many Latin American countries, such as Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina.¹⁰ Tens of thousands of people listened to the lectures and songs of musicians from *La Voz de la Esperanza*. Braulio Pérez Marcio had the opportunity to greet the presidents of such countries as Costa Rica, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic. He was received in the highest social spheres. In 1955 he started the publication of the hymnal *Good News of Voice of Hope*. Dozens of small books and brochures written by Braulio were published as gift materials.¹¹ He also wrote such books as *Vislumbres de esperanza* [Glimpses of Hope], *Cuando la vida duele* [When life hurts], *Perfiles del Nazareno* [Nazarene Profiles], *En la Roma de los césares*

[In the Rome of the Caesars], *Filosofía del dolor y Libertad del temor* [Philosophy of Pain and Freedom of Fear], the last one in coauthorship with Héctor Pereyra Suárez and Fernando Chajj.¹² On a study trip Braulio Pérez Marcio toured the Far East and the Middle East (Palestine, Egypt, Syria and Turkey). He traveled through Europe, the United States, and Latin America. His presentations summoned large auditoriums.

For his radio audition Pérez Marcio recorded 1,467 messages. He directed campaigns in all Latin American countries. It is possible that it led some 40,000 people to join the church. In 1970 Andrews University, Michigan, United States, awarded him the title of Doctor of Letters *Honoris Causa*. He was then the best-known Hispanic preacher.¹³ He had served nine years as an educator, three as a pastor and evangelist, and about 30 with *Voice of Hope*.

In 1971 Milton Peverini García assumed the role of associate preacher of *Voice of Hope*. When the program completed 30 years, there were celebrations in Chicago, Miami, New York, and Los Angeles, United States. Ronald Reagan, California governor, sent a congratulatory message.

Braulio Pérez Marcio died on April 8, 1974, of a heart attack.¹⁴ A crowd accompanied the funeral service at the Glendale church. He was buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery, in Hollywood. Felisa died in 2004 at the age of 96.

Walter R. L. Scragg, from the General Conference, said that Braulio Pérez Marcio was one of the most influential figures in the church in recent years. H.M.S. Richards said: "To know him was to love him." Milton Peverini García wrote: "Because of the pleasant and spiritual way of speaking, Pastor Pérez Marcio was one of the favorite speakers of young people."¹⁵ Gastón Clouzet, former radio director of the radio postal school in the Austral Union Conference, says: "Don Braulio's lectures were simple, clear, and dynamic. . . . He always ended up reciting poetry, and he did it, by the way, masterfully."¹⁶

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. See the main source of information about Braulio Pérez Marcio's life: Milton Pevevini García, *Vida de Braulio Pérez Marcio, fundador de La Voz de la Esperanza: De incrédulo a campeón del evangelio* [Life of Braulio Pérez Marcio, Founder of *Voice of Hope*: From Incredulous to Champion of the Gospel] (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2007). See also: Eduardo Mauro Velardo, “*Braulio Pérez Marcio y el desarrollo de la evangelización radial adventista en el contexto iberoamericano*” [Braulio Pérez Marcio and the Development of Adventist Radio Evangelism in the Latin American Context] (Thesis in theology, River Plate Adventist University, 2001); Daniel Oscar Plenc, *25 Historias de misioneros* [25 Stories of Missionaries] (Buenos Aires: South American Spanish Publishing House, 2013), 80–85.
2. It should be reminded that Spain's dominance over Cuba ended in 1899.
3. Camila Marcio died in 1946 at the age of 68; Manuel Pérez died in 1962 at the age of 86.
4. *La Voz del Colegio: revista del Colegio Adventista del Plata* [Voice of the Academy: River Plate Adventist Academy review] (Puiggari, Entre Rios: 1927–1929).
5. Manuel F. Pérez graduated from the ministerial course in 1933. He married Clara Ernst. He was a pastor, president of the Central Argentine Conference, missionary in Peru, president of River Plate Academy, youth and education director of the Austral Union Conference. His sons Raúl and Héctor Julio were Adventist students. See Manuel F. Pérez Marcio, *Los hijos de la selva* [The Children of the Jungle] (Florida, Buenos

Aires: South American Spanish Publishing House, 1953).

6. Tulio N. Peverini devoted eight years to teaching in Argentina and 34 years to editorial work in Argentina and the United States. For several years he was director of *El Centinela* [The Sentinel], and editor in the Pacific Press Publishing Association, Mountain View, California, United States (1970–1997). Milton Peverini was a pastor in Uruguay, and a teacher and director of departments in Argentina, and succeeded Braulio Pérez Marcio as a speaker and director of *Voice of Hope* (1974–1998).
7. Atilio R. Dupertuis, Argentine pastor, was a theology teacher at Andrews University for 20 years. Isabel was an English and Spanish teacher.
8. Roberto Rabello was also chosen for the Portuguese program.
9. Rolando Ariel Pérez, married to Karin Eriksen, received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Stanford University, United States.
10. See: Bent A. Larsen, “Una visita fructífera” [A Fruitful Visit], *Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], January 1961, 16, 17.
11. See, for example: Braulio Pérez Marcio, *A través de 20 años* [Through 20 Years] (Los Angeles, California: *La Voz de la Esperanza* [Voice of Hope], 1963).
12. Braulio Pérez Marcio, *Vislumbres de esperanza—Cartas a mi hijo* [Glimpses of Hope—Letters to My Son] (Mountain View, California: Inter-American Publishing Association, 1962), also published as *La conquista del éxito* [The Conquest of Success] (Miami: Inter-American Publishing Association, 1985). He was coauthor with Héctor Pereyra Suárez and Fernando Chaij of *Libertad del temor* [Freedom From Fear], 1st ed. (Mountain View, California: Inter-American Publishing Association, 1964).
13. The Paraná School and Adventist College, Entre Ríos, Argentina, established in 1983 is named after Braulio Pérez Marcio.
14. “Falleció el director y orador de *La Voz de la Esperanza*” [The Director and Speaker of *Voice of Hope* Died], *Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], July 1974, 13.
15. Milton Peverini García, *Vida de Braulio Pérez Marcio, fundador de La Voz de la Esperanza: De incrédulo a campeón del evangelio* [Life of Braulio Pérez Marcio, Founder of *Voice of Hope*: From Incredulous to Champion of the Gospel] (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2007), 91.
16. *Ibid.*, 97.

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