



James K. Humphrey and the Sabbath-Day Adventists

R. Clifford Jones

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In *James K. Humphrey and the Sabbath-Day Adventists*, R. Clifford Jones tells the story of this important black religious figure and his attempt to bring about self-determination for twentieth-century blacks in New York City.

Humphrey was a Baptist minister who joined the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church shortly after arriving in New York City from Jamaica at the turn of the twentieth century. A leader of uncommon competency and charisma, Humphrey functioned as an SDA minister in Harlem during the time the community became the black capital of the United States. Though he led his congregation to a position of prominence within the SDA denomination, Humphrey came to believe the black experience in Adventism was one of disenfranchisement. When he refused to alter his plans for a utopian community for blacks in the face of dissent from SDA church leaders, Humphrey's ministerial credentials were revoked and his congregation dissolved. Subsequently, Humphrey established an independent black religious organization, the United Sabbath-Day Adventists.

This book rescues the Sabbath-Day Adventists from obscurity. Humphrey's break with the Seventh-day Adventists provides clues to the state of black-white relationships in the denomination at the time. It set the stage for the creation of the separate administrative structure for blacks established by the SDA church in 1945. This history of a minister and his church demonstrates the struggles of small, independent, black congregations in the urban community during the twentieth century.



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