

## JAMES KEMUEL HUMPHREY AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE UNITED SABBATH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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The urbanization of the African American<sup>1</sup> population in the first half of the twentieth century did not diminish or dampen the premium black people placed on the religion they had practiced in the rural south and the islands of the West Indies. Indeed, the anonymity, heterogeneity, and mobility of the urban community only heightened the need to glean from religion stability and a sense of belonging in their new surroundings. Additionally, the untoward and unwelcome conditions they encountered as they poured into American cities in unprecedented numbers called for an interconnectedness and grounding they experienced in their churches. Yet black urban churches, especially small independent ones, were infinitely more than community centers that served as oases of belonging in an alien environment. They were monuments to the drive for self-determination and autonomy that permeated the African American community during that time.

Given the radicalness of the act of migrating, it is not surprising that blacks were not averse to identifying with small urban churches that operated outside the mainstream of American religion.<sup>2</sup> Often these groups were spawned by charismatic leaders unafraid to buck the status quo and willing to exploit the still-robust black nationalism of the late nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Many of these individuals were especially drawn to Harlem, New York, which had evolved

<sup>1</sup>In the first half of the twentieth century, Americans of African descent were not referred to as African Americans. "Negro" and "colored" were the acceptable terms then. Later in the century, "Afro-American" and "Black" were the preferred terms. Today, the terms in vogue are "African American" or "African-American," though some people of African descent who were not born in the United States and are not U.S. citizens question the validity and utility of the term. In this study, I use "black" and "African American" interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup>Religion has always been a central force in black life, and nowhere was it more so than in early twentieth-century Harlem, where it was expressed in an array of religious organizations. Some of these manifestations were established and structured, while others were loose, moving, and transient. Cults and sects abounded in Harlem, which had churches with names such as "The Metaphysical Church of the Divine Investigation," "St. Matthew's Church of the Divine Silence and Truth," and "Tabernacle of the Congregation of the Disciples of the Kingdom." See James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1968), 163-168. As a contributing editor of *The New York Age*, a black paper, Johnson questioned the existence of, and need for, Harlem's plethora of churches (idem, "The Question of Too Many Churches," *The New Yorker*, 33/26, March 20, 1920, 4).

<sup>3</sup>For a trenchant treatment of the subject, see Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); see also Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966).

from a sleepy village on the northern tip of Manhattan in 1900 to being the undisputed black capital of the United States, if not the world, by the 1920s, and was the locus for the black cultural awakening known as the Harlem Renaissance.<sup>4</sup> One such individual was James Kemuel Humphrey, a Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) minister who in 1930 established an independent religious organization in Harlem, New York, called the United Sabbath-Day Adventists (USDA). Humphrey and the early history of the United Sabbath-Day Adventists amply demonstrate the struggles of small, independent black congregations in the urban community during the twentieth century.

*The Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial  
Career of James K. Humphrey*

James Kemuel Humphrey was born in Jamaica, West Indies, on March 7, 1877, and embarked on a career as a Baptist minister shortly after marrying in 1900. The following year, Humphrey left Jamaica to visit Africa, stopping in New York City for a sightseeing tour that changed his plans and life.<sup>5</sup> J. H. Carroll,

<sup>4</sup>Among the useful works of the era, known in United States history as the Progressive era, are John W. Chambers, *The Tyranny of Change: America in the Progressive Era, 1900-1917* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), Robert M. Cruden, *Ministers of Reform: The Progressives' Achievement in American Civilization, 1889-1920* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), John Milton Cooper, *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900-20* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); William Leuchtenberg, *The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-1932*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Geoffrey Petret, *America in the Twenties* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982). Excellent analyses of Harlem in its heyday, dubbed the "Roaring Twenties," are Jervis Anderson, *This Was Harlem: A Cultural Portrait, 1900-1950* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1981); John Henrik Clarke, ed., *Harlem: A Community in Transition* (New York: Citadel, 1963); David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981); Mark Irving Helbling, *The Harlem Renaissance: The One and the Many* (Westport, CN: Greenwood, 1999); Gilbert Osofky, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963).

<sup>5</sup>Humphrey was a part of the first wave of West Indian immigrants to New York City, who began migrating to the United States in significant numbers around 1900, continuing to do so until 1924, when a change in the country's immigration laws slowed their coming. They came in the hundreds during the first three years of the twentieth century, and in the thousands from then on up to 1924, when a little over 12,000 West Indians arrived in the United States. By 1925, West Indian blacks made up approximately 21 percent of New York City's black population. See Ira de Augustine Reid, *The Negro Immigrant: His Background, Characteristics and Social Adjustment, 1899-1937* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 44; Philip Kasinitz, *Caribbean New York: Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 24-25; Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Pantheon, 1976), 511; Calvin B. Holder, "The Causes and Compositions of West Indian Immigration to New York City, 1900-1952," *Afro-Americans in New York City Life and History*, 11/1, January 1987, 7-27; "Harlem—1920's Mecca for East Indians," *New York Amsterdam News*, Saturday, September 6, 1980, 9. West Indians who entered the United States did so in the dual capacity of immigrant and black, differing from the indigenous African American population in social mores more than in physical characteristics. When the two groups encountered each other for the first time, each reacted with a mixture of uncertainty and distrust born of ignorance, and their interactions were characterized by a complex web of likes and dislikes. The stereotypes they harbored about each other marred their relationship initially. In the end, however, the social vision of each group expanded and their cultural sensibilities were enhanced as they were forced to deal with each other.

an Adventist layman who had been converted from Catholicism to Adventism by Stephen Haskell, was facilitating meetings in his home in Brooklyn, New York, one day when Humphrey walked in. Struck by the simplicity and logic of what he heard, Humphrey joined the Adventist Church, walking away from the Baptist ministry and aborting his trip to Africa.

In 1903, Humphrey was chosen to lead the small group of ten Adventists that had grown out of Carroll's labors. The following year he began to function as a licensed missionary with the Greater New York Conference, and he was ordained as a Seventh-day Adventist minister in 1907. That year he was invited to serve on the executive committee of the Atlantic Union Conference. When the North American Negro Department of the General Conference of SDAs was established in 1909, Humphrey was appointed as one of the members of its executive committee.<sup>6</sup>

The meteoric rise of Humphrey in the Adventist Church continued through the 1910s and 1920s. Humphrey was chosen as a delegate from the Atlantic Union to the General Conference Session in 1913, and the gifted evangelist and leader held several tent revivals in New York City, especially in the borough of Manhattan, all through the decade. The result was that by 1920 the membership of the First Harlem Church, where Humphrey was serving as pastor, had grown to 600. There were four black churches in the Greater New York Conference by the end of 1922, all of them under his supervision.<sup>7</sup> First Harlem continued to grow so well that on January 1, 1924, it planted Harlem Number Two with 108 members. Matthew C. Strachan was called from Florida to lead the new congregation and spoke glowingly of Humphrey's twenty-four years of service to the denomination. When Harlem Number Two was voted into the sisterhood of Seventh-day Adventist churches two months later, its membership was 125.<sup>8</sup>

In spite of Humphrey's success as an Adventist pastor, it appears that his ministerial career in the denomination was marked by stress. As Humphrey tendered his report of Adventist ministry in the African American community to the delegates at the Eighteenth Session of the Greater New York Conference, he lamented his physical condition, which he claimed had curtailed his evangelistic activities in Harlem the previous year. He explained that his

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See Lennox Raphael, "West Indians and Afro-Americans," *Freedomways*, 4/3, Summer 1964, 442; Orde Coombs, "West Indians in New York: Moving Beyond the Limbo Pole," *New York*, 3/28, July 13, 1970, 28-32; Lennox Raphael, "The West Indian Syndrome: To Be or Not To Be an American Negro," *Negro Digest*, 13/1, November 1963, 30-34.

<sup>6</sup>*The General Conference Bulletin*, 6/16, Thirty-Seventh Session (Washington, DC: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1909), 243.

<sup>7</sup>Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Minutes of the Seventeenth Session of the Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*, June 20-24, 1922, Greater New York Conference Archives, Manhasset, New York.

<sup>8</sup>Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Minutes of the Eighteenth Session of the Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*, March 12-14, 1924, Greater New York Conference Archives, Manhasset, New York.

burden then was not to raise money, but to see his membership grow, and that membership growth was his lifelong ambition. Yet Humphrey held up the giving totals of blacks—\$22,224 in tithes and \$18,388 for foreign missions—of the previous year for analysis, arguing that, given their limited economic resources, blacks were giving proportionally more than other groups. In his report, Humphrey hoped for the time when he would be asked to evangelize not only in New York City, but in Philadelphia and Chicago as well.<sup>9</sup>

It appears that Humphrey wanted to leave New York City, twice petitioning church leaders to be relocated. On both occasions he was turned down, ostensibly because the church in New York City was thriving under his leadership. Humphrey never offered reasons for wanting to leave New York City, though they are not difficult to infer. Humphrey's association with, and tenure within, the SDA Church was marked by emotional stress over the race issue. In 1905, shortly after he began working as a licensed missionary, he was accosted by an individual about to cut ties with the church and was asked to do the same.<sup>10</sup> Obviously, Humphrey was disenchanted with his church, and his displeasure was known. Yet Humphrey "flatly refused" to dissociate himself from the denomination at that time, protesting that he had never come across a precedent in God's word for anyone rejecting "God's organized plan of work" and succeeding.<sup>11</sup>

Humphrey shared this information at the General Conference Session of 1922, at which he had been asked to preach. The pastor of Harlem Number One chose suffering and "The Divine Program" as the theme and title of his sermon, which was based on 1 Pet 5:10. More personal testimony than the exposition of the biblical passage, the sermon reveals a man with a heavy heart and a mind struggling to come to grips with unresolved issues. Humphrey claimed that independent churches, like the one the brother wanted to start, only appealed to recalcitrants and individuals who had grown lukewarm in their commitment to the church, and stated that those who love the truth as it is found in Jesus Christ do not lower its bar. His intention was to remain in the Word, and he asserted that "the cause of Jesus Christ is greater than men, greater than plans, greater than organization." Of supreme importance to him were the salvation of his own soul, the glorification of God, and the salvation of all whom God had entrusted to his care.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout the 1920s, James K. Humphrey served the SDA Church with vision and distinction, leading his congregation to a position of primacy and

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>No one is sure who the individual referred to is, though speculation centers on Louis C. Shaefe, whose Washington, DC, congregation defected from the denomination in 1907. The group returned to the fold some years later. Subsequently, Shaefe left again, never to return. See Jacob Justiss, *Angels in Ebony* (Toledo: Jet Printing, 1975), 45.

<sup>11</sup>*General Conference Bulletin*, Fortieth Session, 9/11, Mountain View, California, May 25, 1922, 253, 254.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

prominence in the Greater New York Conference. In 1927, First Harlem was the largest SDA Church in New York City and one of the largest in the United States.<sup>13</sup> Yet, as the 1920s drew to a close, Humphrey's patience with the way the denomination was relating to people of color wore thin. A series of events then took place in 1928 and 1929 that ultimately led to Humphrey's break with the SDA denomination and the establishment of his own religious organization.

In October 1928, William H. Green, the black Detroit lawyer who had led the Negro Department for almost ten years, died, creating a vacuum in the black work.<sup>14</sup> At the Spring meeting of the world church the following year, the Black Caucus passed a resolution calling for the creation of regional conferences to replace the Negro Department, which they believed was ineffective. Humphrey was at the forefront of the call for regional conferences. General Conference leaders responded to the request by empaneling a committee to study the issue. The committee consisted of eighteen individuals, eleven of whom were white, and Humphrey was one of the committee's six blacks. Outnumbered two to one, the blacks were powerless to stop the body from "emphatically and absolutely" voting down the idea of regional conferences. Yet what particularly distressed them was the committee's statement that "Black Conferences are out of the question. Don't ever ask for a Black Conference again."<sup>15</sup>

Sometime after the spring meeting of Adventist world church leaders, Humphrey began to promote the idea of an all-black commune among his members.<sup>16</sup> The project was called Utopia Park and billed as the "Fortune Spot of America for Colored People."<sup>17</sup> When conference leaders learned of this venture, they attempted to talk about it with Humphrey, who rebuffed them. Unable to have an audience with Humphrey, SDA church leaders felt constrained to advise the revocation of his ministerial credentials and the expulsion of his congregation, which voted 595 to 5 in support of him, from the denominational structure in January 1930.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Comparative Reports for the Years 1920-1927, Twentieth Session*, March 20-24, 1928.

<sup>14</sup>Humphrey was one of the three individuals who authored the obituary of W. H. Green, who died on October 31, 1928. Humphrey was at Green's funeral services, which were held in Detroit, Michigan, and presided over by General Conference president, W. A. Spicer, who delivered the eulogy (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 105/52, December 27, 1928, 22).

<sup>15</sup>Alven Makapela, *The Problem with Africanity in the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Lewiston: Mellen, 1996), 229-231; W. W. Fordham, *Righteous Rebel* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1990), 79.

<sup>16</sup>For an excellent examination of the history and purpose of utopian communities, see William H. Pease and Jane H. Pease, *Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in America* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963).

<sup>17</sup>*The Utopia Park Health Benevolent Association* (n.p.: n.d.).

<sup>18</sup>See Joe Mesar and Tom Dybdahl, "The Utopia Park Affair and the Rise of Northern Black Adventists," *Adventist Heritage*, 1/1, January 1974, 34-41, 53-54; James Lamar McElhany, ed., *Statement Regarding the Present Standing of Elder J. K. Humphrey* (Washington, DC: General Conference

*The United Sabbath-Day Adventists Under  
Humphrey, 1930-1952*

Establishment of United Sabbath-Day Congregations

Frustrated that the SDA denomination had failed to give them "due consideration" in spite of their faithfulness and loyalty and, more importantly, had failed to "show a better example of Christlikeness in Righteousness, Justice and Equity," Humphrey and his loyalists believed they had ample reason to dissociate themselves from the SDA Church and form their own.<sup>19</sup>

The group adopted the name USDAs in January 1930 after a committee of twenty-three individuals had given extended study to the matter. The committee, which voted twenty-one to two in favor of the name, believed that it could not continue using the name "Seventh-day Adventist" because that term stood for "unfair treatment of colored people through discrimination and 'Jim-Crowism.'" "United" was chosen because of the emphasis the Bible places on unity, and because unity is a hallmark of true Christianity. Additionally, the new religious body would try to effect unity between individuals and groups, including racial and ethnic groups. This unity would authenticate and motivate the group's endeavors to preach the gospel worldwide. Still believing in the sanctity of the Sabbath, the group opted to use the term "Sabbath-Day," going a step further to assert that people who keep the Sabbath holy must of necessity be holy themselves. Finally, because members were convinced that Jesus would be returning to earth soon to end the reign of sin and usher in an age of peace and holiness, they kept the word "Adventists."<sup>20</sup>

United Sabbath-Day Adventists were buoyant and optimistic at the start of their organization, believing that American society was ripe for proselytizing. The group decried the sluggishness with which SDAs had tried to reach African Americans, and was particularly chagrined that after almost sixty years of contact, black SDA church membership was only approximately 9,000. While Sabbath-Day Adventist evangelistic outlook was going to be global, the new religious body would give specialized focus to their marginalized brothers and sisters in the United States, whom they characterized as "susceptible to the religion of Jesus Christ, and are so willing

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of Seventh-day Adventists, 1930); "Seventh-day Adventists Break with White Governing Body Over Minister: Harlem Church Severs Ties with Conference on Grounds that Parent Group Practices Racial Discrimination," *New York Amsterdam News*, November 6, 1929, 20/49, 1; "Adventist Pastor Slams BroadSides at Fraud Charges," *New York Amsterdam News*, November 13, 1929, 20/50, 1, 3; "Rev. J. K. Humphrey Loses 25-year Pastorate in 7th Day [sic] Adventist Church in New York," *The New York Age*, 43/10, November 16, 1929, 1; "Minister Cleared in Resort Project: Kelly Denies His Office Persecuted Sponsor of Venture," *The New York Amsterdam News*, December 4, 1929, 21/1, 2; Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, *Minutes of the Twenty-First Biennial Session of the Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 27-29, 1930, Greater New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Archives, Manhasset, New York.

<sup>19</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, 2/11, November 1931, 5.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 4.

to hear any one speak of the Savior who died for them.”<sup>21</sup>

The evidence appears to substantiate the claims of Sabbath-Day Adventist leadership that the infant denomination grew quickly. Not surprisingly, the largest USDA congregation was in New York City, where Humphrey lived and was well known. Parent of every other Sabbath-Day Adventist congregation, this congregation, which by mid-1931 numbered 530, was committed to fostering evangelistic efforts worldwide. Its Sabbath school was touted to be the best organized among Adventists in the world, and the church boasted a youth membership well in excess of 200. By late 1931, other USDA congregations had been spawned in Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Omaha, Milwaukee, Newark, and Kingston, Jamaica. How USDA established these churches is unclear, though it appears that people sympathetic to Humphrey and his cause contacted him with requests to be organized.<sup>22</sup>

Humphrey alleged that a torrent of calls for the organization of Sabbath-Day Adventist congregations had been received from Jamaica and Central and Latin America. The calls prompted him to appeal for human and financial resources, and only a lack of help had thwarted a more aggressive response from the new religious body, according to Humphrey. A dearth of financial resources had prevented him from visiting Panama, though two groups organized themselves there in 1931.<sup>23</sup> United Sabbath-Day Adventist congregations were small and saddled with pressing financial needs, which, given their Depression-era context, are understandable.

By August 1932, USDA were lauding their rise and progress, accomplished “under the courageous and energetic leadership of Elder James K. Humphrey.” In spite of severe opposition from detractors, the organization had moved “forward steadily,” proving wrong the predictions of an early demise and standing tall as a “challenge to the bigotry and selfishness of those who once exploited them.”<sup>24</sup> The organization claimed a worldwide membership of 1,200 people, worshiping in fifteen congregations and missions in places as far away as Jamaica, West Indies. Saying that “a good report maketh the bones fat,” Humphrey informed his followers in August 1932 that the New York Supreme Court, ruling in their favor, had directed the Greater New York Conference to return the deed of their property to them.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 14.

<sup>24</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, 3/8, August 1932, 3.

<sup>25</sup>Property ownership had played no small role in Humphrey’s break with the SDA Church in 1929. Humphrey and his supporters fundamentally disagreed with the SDA church policy, in which the local conference corporation holds the title to all property belonging to its constituent churches. Ostensibly, it was only after local conference, union, and General Conference officials agreed on the night of November 2, 1929, to turn over the title of First Harlem’s building that they were allowed to leave the premises unharmed. USDA jealously guarded their property once it was returned to them.

Humphrey believed that the ruling was an answer to prayer and that "in every respect" the new body was much better off than "when she was connected with the Seventh-day Adventists."<sup>26</sup>

Who were the people that joined the Sabbath-Day Adventists? Did the group attract only urban slum dwellers, immigrants from the South and the West Indies searching for stability in an unfriendly, alien environment? Based on the photos, art work, and articles in the denomination's official organ, the *United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, a reasonable conclusion is that the group attracted educated, middle-class, well-to-do individuals, as well as those mired in poverty. Pictures of church leaders and members show well-dressed, immaculately coiffured people. Children are adequately and tastefully clothed, and even snapshots of the Kingston and Higgins Town, Jamaica, congregations tell a story of blacks being able to clothe themselves well in the midst of worldwide depression.

### General Conference Sessions

Almost from their inception, USDAs convened General Conference sessions annually. The objectives of these sessions included the receiving of reports from satellite groups and the dissemination of information from headquarters. Committees on Nominations, Constitution and By-Laws, Entertainment, Plans and Recommendations, and Credentials and Licenses were impaneled, usually completing their tasks before the sessions adjourned. Humphrey presided over each session and was never averse to injecting devotional elements into these business sessions. As such, each session started with singing, and whenever there was not much business to attend to or there were lapses in the agenda, delegates took to the floor to testify of God's blessings and the joys of being associated with the organization. Seldom were doctrinal or theological issues taken up. A General Conference session more often addressed housekeeping matters, serving as a rallying point for the faithful and a motivational device for the feeble of faith.<sup>27</sup>

The General Conference of Sabbath-Day Adventists had officer personnel and directors for the Sabbath School and Youth Departments. It is certain that all these positions were up for reelection at a General Conference session. The only position not up for reelection was the presidency. Obviously, that Humphrey would continue on as leader of the group was not up for discussion, debate, or a vote. Humphrey was the indisputable leader of the organization, and would be at its helm during his lifetime.<sup>28</sup>

### The Theology of James K. Humphrey

Humphrey came searching for a better life in America, where he lived through World War I, the Harlem Renaissance, the stock-market crash, the Great

<sup>26</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, 3/8, August 1932, 7.

<sup>27</sup>*Constitution and By-Laws of the New York United Sabbath-Day Adventist Church* (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>28</sup>Due to failing health, Humphrey did give up leadership of the Sabbath-Day Adventists in 1947, five years before his death in 1952.



Depression, World War II, the Korean War, and the start of the Cold War. The first half of the twentieth century was a period of upheaval and “Hard Times” interspersed with stints of glamor and vigor. When Humphrey died, America was but two years into the “Fabulous Fifties.”

A product of his times, Humphrey was not trained in theology and may never have attended a seminary for ministerial instruction. Yet he performed with distinction as a minister and exhibited an appreciable knowledge of the Bible, which was his standard and rule and the matrix in which his theological understanding was grounded. Humphrey believed that “the Bible and the Bible only is the indisputable word of God,” adding that “there is no other book upon which the world may depend for the gospel but the Bible.” As such, he appealed to his members to live up to the “truths of the gospel brought forth in God’s holy book.”<sup>29</sup>

Humphrey held that history was purposeful, with events moving inexorably toward a definite goal. He based his belief on the “biblical” passage: “There is a time and place for everything under the sun.”<sup>30</sup> For Humphrey, time was about to run out, and his was earth’s last generation, making the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom an urgent matter. “Jesus Christ is near at hand,” Humphrey affirmed, calling upon followers to “prepare the people to meet this solemn event.” Yet to do so meant paying heed to and proclaiming God’s Ten Commandment Law, especially the fourth, which “calls upon every man, woman and child to remember the Sabbath Day which is the seventh day of the week (Saturday) to keep it holy.” Humphrey contended that Scripture contained no warrant or backing for the observance of Sunday as the Bible Sabbath.<sup>31</sup>

For Humphrey, the time was right for “members of the Ethiopian race” to take “a pure and true gospel” to the world. To be sure, the gospel was not the exclusive property of any race or group of people; yet it had been bequeathed to the “dark-skinned peoples of the world who have been slighted and segregated and discriminated against by both Jews and Gentiles.” God, in his providence and wisdom, had elevated “downtrodden and despised” blacks by giving them an opportunity “to help themselves in the knowledge of the Gospel of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.” It was now the “duty and obligation” of the people of African descent to promulgate the gospel.<sup>32</sup>

Referencing Gen 10:1-5, the bishop<sup>33</sup> posited that Jews had descended

<sup>29</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Messenger*, August 1932, 3.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 2. The biblical passage to which Humphrey was alluding is a conflation of Eccl 3:1: “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven” with the phrase “under the sun,” which occurs some twenty-five times in Ecclesiastes.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>Humphrey assumed the title of “bishop” soon after the launch of his denomination. In doing so, he followed in the tradition of black religious leaders. As understood by these individuals, “bishop” “is a rank in the ordained Christian ministry. The bishop oversees the affairs of the church in a particular area, and only bishops can ordain others to the ministry” (Albert J.

from Japheth and were once the chosen people of God, but that they had been replaced when, believing themselves better than the rest of humankind, they had failed to share their knowledge of God. Subsequently, God conscripted the Gentiles for service. Yet the Gentiles had failed “just as lamentably as the Jews,” discriminating against both Jews and blacks, and becoming in the process “unfit to proclaim the gospel.” It had become the lot of blacks to preach the gospel, and Humphrey, as an “Apostle to the Negro race,” felt constrained to “point out the prophecies that relate to the dark-skinned peoples of the world in the call to give the closing message to mankind.” This call to serve humbled the bishop, who believed that all people were to be addressed with the gospel, even though some would ultimately reject it.<sup>34</sup>

Humphrey believed that the worldwide economic depression of the 1930s was the direct result of humanity’s selfishness. He thought as much because he understood God to be omnipotent and, as such, able to supply all the temporal needs of the human family. The Depression was viewed as an embarrassment to individuals and entire nations alike, and Humphrey indicted England and the United States as the two main culprits for triggering it. As a consequence, these two nations were primarily responsible for implementing the drastic measures needed to deal with the crippling effects of the Depression. The Sabbath-Day Adventist leader held that the selfishness of humanity was at variance with the love and benevolence of God, which, coupled with God’s power and mercy, were reasons for thanksgiving. Yet the Thanksgiving season of 1931 would be marred because of the ravishing effects of the Depression.<sup>35</sup>

Humphrey thought World War II was a fulfillment of Bible prophecy and a sure sign that the end of human history was imminent. To be sure, war had always been a fact of human existence, but World War II was a unique conflagration in which new artillery was being used for the first time, causing the bishop to cast and view the war in apocalyptic images. Humphrey saw no safety or deliverance for the faithful in human ingenuity, but only in God, who was an ever-present recourse and refuge. Moreover, in spite of the breathtaking inventions of humanity, the victory of God’s people was guaranteed. Though he did not advise his congregants whether they should enlist in the armed forces or seek employment in any war-related industry, he did affirm the NT teaching that Christians support their governments and leaders.<sup>36</sup>

Humphrey asserted that suffering was God’s wonderful program for

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Raboteau, *African-American Religion* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1999], 133). An insightful and valuable contribution on some of these individuals, including some who are not as well known, is Randall K. Burkett and Richard Newman’s *Black Apostles: Afro-American Clergy Confront the Twentieth Century* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1978).

<sup>34</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Messenger*, August 1932, 2.

<sup>35</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Messenger*, 2/11, November 1931, 3.

<sup>36</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, 16/3, July-September 1944, 1-5. World War II did have an impact on USDA operations. Among other things, it led to the cancellation of their 1944 General Conference Session (*ibid.*, 6).

Christians, who must all suffer in this world for some time. Suffering being in the will of a sovereign God, Christians have no control over it and must accept it as submissive children of a God who knows what is in their best interest and for their most good. Suffering puts people on an equal footing, uniting them in a community of shared sympathy and leading them to a state of perfection. In fact, suffering is one of the means through which perfection is realized. For Humphrey, suffering liberates and sanctifies, grounding Christians in the truth; yet suffering is a fleeting reality caused by the temporal nature of the universe. This being the case, Humphrey, like most Christians of his time, was eager for the return of Jesus Christ, and he urged his fellow pilgrims to hold on in the hope of their Lord's soon return.<sup>37</sup>

Like Seventh-day Adventists, Humphrey made a sharp distinction between the uses that could be made of tithes and offerings. The tithe was to be used exclusively for the remuneration of the credentialed and licensed clergy. Basing his argument on the Melchizedek model of the OT, Humphrey asserted that Jesus was the High Priest of the Christian, and, as such, desires to see "his ministers kept on the job by the faithfulness of His people bringing their tithes into the storehouse." Offerings were intended either for foreign or home missions. As the former, they were to be used beyond the precincts of the church that generated them, while home mission offerings could be used to meet the operating expenses of the local congregation, including the salaries of church personnel other than the minister.<sup>38</sup>

Humphrey prized young people, who he believed faced an inordinate amount of temptation to evil. He frowned upon the penchant of adults to condemn the youth for the "frivolity and fickleness" that often characterized their religion, reminding the adults that they were still growing as Christians too. At the same time, adults were not to give blanket endorsement to the activities of youth. Youth needed to be taught, and it was the duty of adults to mentor and model for them. Humphrey reminded parents that their most effective teaching was a life that exemplified the truths and principles they expected their children to emulate.<sup>39</sup>

Citing the economic crisis then gripping the world as proof that governments and nations were unable to provide meaningful relief for the critical challenges and issues of life, the bishop believed that the youth of society constituted the best hope for the future of the church and the world. He called upon churches to partner and collaborate with homes to "understand the thoughts, feelings, interests, and actions of the youths committed to their care." With a view to making Christianity "real, practical, and meaningful,"

<sup>37</sup>*General Conference Bulletin*, Fortieth Session, 253, 254. Humphrey's understanding of pain and suffering does not reflect the historic African American perspective. Two excellent studies of the African American theology of pain and suffering are James H. Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1975); and Anthony B. Pinn, *Why, Lord: Suffering and Evil in Black Theology* (New York: Continuum, 1995).

<sup>38</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Messenger*, June 1939, 5.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

Sabbath-Day Adventist youth systematically visited the sick and suffering, leaving behind cheer and goodwill. The New York congregation often partnered with other congregations in these humanitarian jaunts, realizing that in unity there is strength.<sup>40</sup>

#### Seventh-day Adventists and Sabbath-Day Adventists: A Comparative Analysis

In his seminal work, *The Social Teaching of the Black Churches*, Peter J. Paris argues that the major objective of the independent black church movement was “the institutionalization of the Christian faith in a nonracist form” and that the founders of independent black churches never intended that their churches differ from those of their white counterparts in policy and doctrine. According to Paris, two factors accounted for their reality. The first is that black churches were dependent on the cooperation of whites for their emergence and development, often needing their help to procure loans to acquire property. Additionally, because blacks resolutely believed in the ideal society of love and inclusion, they saw black churches as a necessary, though temporary, evil prompted by the contingencies of race.<sup>41</sup>

While the first factor does not appear to have applied to the Sabbath-Day Adventists, the second does. Sabbath-Day Adventists were comfortable with most of the doctrines and teachings of the SDA Church, their theological beliefs not just approximating those of their former associates, but in many respects mirroring them.<sup>42</sup> Sabbath-Day Adventists accepted the teaching of the Holy Spirit as the third member of the Trinity, emphasizing that a belief in and, more important, a reception of the Holy Spirit, did not entail glossalia or the emotional outbursts that others claimed it did. They also believed in the imminency of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone, the efficacy of Christian stewardship, and the power of the gospel to transform lives and characters through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Obedience to the Ten Commandments of God received special emphasis from them, as did faith in Jesus Christ. Like all Christians, they desired to see the gospel preached around the world, believing that transformed lives on earth offered a glimpse and foretaste of what life in the world to come would be like.<sup>43</sup>

Not surprisingly, the sanctity of the Sabbath was an item on which both Seventh-day Adventists and Sabbath-Day Adventists agreed. While Humphrey contended that Sabbath-keeping did not inherently contain any soteriological or salvific properties, he believed that it was the single most distinguishing

<sup>40</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, November 1931, 11.

<sup>41</sup>Peter J. Paris, *The Social Teaching of the Black Churches* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 129.

<sup>42</sup>The closest thing to a fundamental set of doctrines that Sabbath-Day Adventists adopted was authored by R. Leo Soaries, vice-president of the organization, in 1932. It shows that, in the main, Sabbath-Day Adventist beliefs reflected those of mainstream Christianity; see *The United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, August 1932, 9-10 (Appendix A).

<sup>43</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, November 1931, 3.

feature of his group. He often reminded members of this fact, imploring them to exercise maximum care with the start and conclusion of the Sabbath, times when people are most prone to violate the Sabbath. In encouraging greater fidelity in Sabbath-keeping, Humphrey cautioned against the temptation to lapse into the spiritual pride of the “holier-than-thou” attitude of many Christians who fall victim to a “works theology.” Yet he asserted that greater faithfulness in Sabbath-keeping would engender more conversions among a Sabbath-keeper’s neighbors, who the bishop believed were hungry for the truth. Getting people to keep the Sabbath was what Humphrey was all about. As such, the spiritual leader of the Sabbath-Day Adventists preferred that the heretofore unchurched join his congregation, not Seventh-day Adventists disgruntled with their denomination.<sup>44</sup>

Like SDAs, USDAs emphasized Bible study, bemoaning the unacceptably high level of biblical illiteracy among the general population. Believing that knowledge of the Holy Scriptures benefitted people both spiritually and socially, USDAs sought to engender a love for the Bible among their members by offering a plethora of opportunities for its study. More importantly, Humphrey anchored his preaching in the Bible, unapologetically pointing members to the Bible’s primacy and potency, and reminding them that the Bible supplied powerful antidotes for the stressors of life.<sup>45</sup>

One tool used to encourage Sabbath-Day Adventists to study the Bible was *The Sabbath School Tutor*. Authored by Humphrey, *The Sabbath School Tutor*, with the text “Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my Path—Psalm 119:105” boldly displayed across its cover, was a virtual spinoff of the Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly of Seventh-day Adventists. Published quarterly, its lessons consisted of a main passage of Scripture to be memorized, and a series of questions followed by a verse of Scripture that supplied the answers. Little supplementary material was used, although from the way the material was presented, one could detect the influence of outside sources. The lessons were well written and attractively presented, each lesson ending with a thought-provoking question on a practical element of faith<sup>46</sup> and a reminder that members not forget to support the Thirteenth Sabbath offering.<sup>47</sup>

Sabbath-Day Adventists also believed in the primacy and power of prayer. For them, God was capable of doing anything, including restoring health to the sick. God was an unchanging God, who, to the extent of the faith exercised in him, could repeat any of the miraculous feats recorded in sacred Scripture. An objective of USDAs was relating to God in such a way that they would be in

<sup>44</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, June 1939, 4. Speaking more on the issue, Humphrey claimed that former SDAs made “bad members” (*ibid.*).

<sup>45</sup>*United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, November 1931, 14.

<sup>46</sup>*The Sabbath School Tutor*, July-September 1944, 16/3, 7-14.

<sup>47</sup>Like SDAs, USDAs divided the calendar into four quarters, the last Sabbath of each quarter being designated Thirteenth Sabbath. On this Sabbath, a special offering was collected for missionary endeavors around the world.

a position to receive from God spiritual help and physical healing. Believing that the human being is an integrated whole, Humphrey sought to bring spiritual, social, and physical healing to his members. In keeping with the biblical injunction found in Jas 5:12, the bishop prayed for the sick, anointing them as he laid hands on them. Humphrey also believed in the power of God to bring deliverance to demon-possessed people; yet the bishop's anointing services were not like the flamboyant ones practiced by some of the African American preachers in Harlem at the time.<sup>48</sup>

In matters of lifestyle, Sabbath-Day Adventists, like SDAs, did not always live what they believed and preached. For example, in the area of dress, members early demonstrated a stubborn independence, opting to wear jewelry, the absence of which was at the time a hallmark of Seventh-day Adventism.<sup>49</sup>

United Sabbath-Day Adventists continued more than the doctrinal traditions of SDAs, perpetuating also many of the programs and ministries of their former associates. For example, the Sabbath-Day Adventists continued the annual Fall Week of Prayer, publishing the readings for the week in their official organ, *The United Sabbath-Day Adventist Messenger*, in much the same way as SDAs published theirs in the *Review and Herald*, the official organ. Yet it was in structuring their congregations like the SDAs that Humphrey showed a disinclination to veer away from his former church in discernible and distinguishable ways. The religious services and ministries of USDAs were like those of SDAs. In addition, Humphrey grouped his congregations together in conferences and, like SDAs, held General Conference Sessions annually for the first decade of their existence and biennially thereafter. Given Humphrey's experience with the SDA organization, and the deep-seated feelings of disappointment and disillusionment engendered as a result, his decision to maintain so much of the SDA Church is noteworthy. The similarities between the two religious bodies created confusion among the uninformed, and not a few people associated with the USDAs, thinking they had joined an SDA Church.<sup>50</sup>

Sabbath-Day Adventists differed from SDAs in one significant area—the prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White. To be sure, Humphrey initially believed in the authority of White, who was a contemporary of his for almost two decades of his association with the SDA Church. While it is uncertain if the two

<sup>48</sup>Ucilla La Condre (interview by author, tape recording, Bronx, New York, June 11, 2000). For an insightful look at some of the more flamboyant personalities who ministered in the African American community during Humphrey's era, see Arthur Huff Fauset, *Black Gods of the Metropolis: Negro Religious Cults of the Urban North* (New York: Octagon, 1970); see also Jill Watts, *God, Harlem, U.S.A.: The Father Divine Story* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); and Robert Weisbrot, *Father Divine and the Struggle for Racial Equality* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

<sup>49</sup>Bernice Samuel (interview by the author, tape recording, Queens, New York, April 17, 2000). Humphrey was jolted when his daughter showed up at church one day with her ears pierced. Thereafter, his relationship with his daughter soured. In time, Ruth stopped attending church altogether, even though she lived across the street from the church building.

<sup>50</sup>The fact that USDAs abbreviate their name as Seventh-day Adventists do (SDA) contributed to the confusion. There is no evidence that Sabbath-Day Adventists did so precisely for this purpose.

ever met, it is true that Humphrey became increasingly disillusioned with White's counsel on the race issue—or more precisely, the misapplication of her counsel by white church leaders to support policies biased against blacks.<sup>51</sup> It is also true that there was one significant development in the bishop's teaching and preaching after his break with the SDA organization. Noticeably absent was any mention of White as an authoritative prophet sent by God with an urgent message for earth's last generation. Humphrey never quoted White to augment the material in his denomination's Sabbath school booklet. More importantly, Humphrey, unlike most SDA preachers of his era, never referred to White in any of his sermons. For him the Bible was the only source he needed, and it required no outside interpretation or elaboration. The bishop painstakingly stressed the difference between the writings of White and the Holy Scriptures, arguing that White was to be used as a reference only. For him, White's works could never approximate the canonicity of the Holy Bible, and the bishop explained the differences between the writings of White and the Bible so well that some of his members concluded their leader neither believed in nor accepted her works as authoritative or guiding.<sup>52</sup> Others have asserted that their founding pastor's position on White is the main reason the Sabbath-Day Adventists have been unable to reconcile with SDAs.<sup>53</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Notwithstanding what seems like the proliferation of USDA congregations during the 1930s and up to Humphrey's death in 1952, the fact is that the organization never experienced great success attracting the unchurched and unbelievers, and only limited success proselytizing former SDAs. Humphrey may have been one of Seventh-day Adventism's premier evangelists and outstanding pastors before he was defrocked, but once he became the head of the Sabbath-Day Adventists, he ceased to engage in evangelism on the scale he had done previously. More importantly, from their inception USDAs had one major goal—survival. Struggles with the SDA denomination and internal conflicts only made the pursuit of their goal more acute. Yet Sabbath-Day Adventists during Humphrey's lifetime may not be characterized as an insular, self-contained group preoccupied with self-preservation and self-perpetuation.

E. Forrest Harris Jr. contends that the independent black church movement and the black cults and sects of the North were “unique expressions of black people's quest for collective self-consciousness through religious commitments.” Further, these religious bodies functioned as a “source of power and self-definition alternative to the dehumanizing anti-self images” in the broader society, providing members with “hope, assurance, and a sense of

<sup>51</sup>See Ronald D. Graybill, *E. G. White and Church Race Relations* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1970).

<sup>52</sup>La Condre; Samuel.

<sup>53</sup>Olga La Beet (interview by author, tape recording, New York, New York, June 12, 2000); Dorothy Simmonds (interview by author, tape recording, Mt. Vernon, New York, June 11, 2000).

group identification.”<sup>54</sup> Thus, for USDAs, church was a place where relationships were formed and nurtured, life partners were procured, children were socialized, youth were trained to assume positions of responsibility in society, and, most importantly, a religious organization was built through which they could express their dreams and aspirations.<sup>55</sup>

In the end, Humphrey’s troubles with the SDA Church did not center around the denomination’s theology or biblical understanding, a fact that saw his preaching remain, for the most part, mainstream Adventist. His orthodoxy did not veer much to the left or right of Seventh-day Adventism’s fundamental beliefs. In spite of the negative experiences he had had in the SDA denomination, Humphrey never publicly condemned or spoke ill of his former denomination. On more than one occasion he tried to clear up from the pulpit controversy surrounding White’s counsels regarding African Americans.<sup>56</sup> In the pulpit he was all dignity and decorum, never using the “sacred desk” as a vantage point from which to lob verbal assaults or denunciations, because he was too busy “preaching the word.”<sup>57</sup>

<sup>54</sup>E. Forrest Harris Jr., *Ministry for Social Crisis: Theology and Praxis in the Black Church Tradition* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1993), 24-25.

<sup>55</sup>See, e.g., Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), xi.

<sup>56</sup>La Beet; cf. n. 51 above.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.



## APPENDIX

### FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS OF SABBATH-DAY ADVENTISTS SOME THINGS WE BELIEVE

#### United Sabbath-Day Adventists Believe

That the Bible is the word of God, and that all scripture was given by inspiration and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, in order that believers may attain unto perfection. 2 Tim. 3:16.

That the Holy Scriptures are sufficient to impart unto us all the wisdom, knowledge and understanding necessary to salvation. 2 Tim. 3:15.

That the word of God should be studied and rightly divided by those who are seeking God's approval. 2 Tim. 2:15.

That prophecies were not given by the will or intelligence of men, but holy men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

That the prophecies of the Bible are sure to be fulfilled, that, like a giant indistinguishable ray of light, they shine through the darkness of time until Jesus Christ returns. 2 Peter 1:19.

That those who follow the word of God will never walk in darkness. Psa. 119:105.

That God used Jesus Christ as the Creator of all things in heaven and earth. John 1:1-5; Col. 1:13-16; Heb. 1:1, 2.

That Jesus possessed a human and divine nature to successfully accomplish the work of redemption; that he had to be human and divine to make the connection (that was broken through the sin of our first parents) between fallen man and Jehovah. Phil. 2:8; Matt. 1:21, 23; Heb. 2:14-18.

That Christ is able to save the vilest sinner from sin and eternal death. Matt. 1:21; Acts 16:31; Rom. 5:1; John 3:16; Matt. 9:13.

That eternal life is a gift which was made possible through the death of Christ, and we also believe that the wages of sin is eternal death. Rom. 6:23.

That death came as a result of man's disobedience. Rom. 5:12-19.

That man was created a mortal being in a condition where death was possible. Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:22.

That the soul of man is himself, that the term "Immortal soul" is contrary to the Scriptures, and that at death the soul dies. Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 16:3.

That the dead are in their graves, and there they shall remain until Jesus comes. Job 14:7-15; 17:13.

That the righteous shall be rewarded at the Second Advent of Christ. Isa. 40:10; 62:11; Rev. 22:12.

That the wicked shall be punished with complete annihilation after the thousand years' reign of Christ and the saints. Rev. 20:7-9; Mal. 4:1; Psa. 37:10, 20, 38; 34:21, Prov. 2:22.

That the Judgment takes place after the coming of our savior Jesus Christ. Psa. 96:13; 50:3; 2 Tim. 4:1; Matt. 25:31-40.

That the testimony of Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy; that it was the Spirit of Christ that prompted and actuated the prophets, and that, therefore, Christ was directing intelligence behind every statement made, whether orally or in writing, by them. It was Christ who testified, through the prophets, therefore the testimony of Christ is the spirit of prophecy, and not the gift of prophecy. 1 Peter 1:10, 11; Rev. 1:9; 19:10.

That the martyrs throughout the Dark Ages had the testimony of Christ, and suffered for it. Rev. 20:4.

That the one hundred and forty-four thousand are not Gentiles, but Jews from the fleshly stock of Abraham, who shall be saved in God's kingdom; that they are not contaminated with popular false doctrines, hence they are considered virgins and are the first fruits of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We further believe that they form a special class, which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Rev. 7:1-4; 14:1-5.

That the Holy Spirit is the seal of God and that we are sealed with that Spirit. Eph. 4:31; 1:13, 14; 2 Cor. 1:22. We believe that Christ was sealed with the Holy Spirit on the day of His baptism. John 6:27.

That the Holy Spirit is given for the purpose of leading and guiding God's people into all truth, and to glorify Christ in their lives. John 16:13, 14.

That the Holy Spirit is given as the Comforter, and abides with the Christian for ever. John 14:16, 17.

That whenever a man repents and is converted and baptized, he receives the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:38; 3:19.

That a man should be converted, or should be the recipient of the "new birth" to enter into the Kingdom of God. John 3:5; Matt. 18:3.

That those who are looking for the coming of Christ should live such lives as will make them worthy of being caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Titus 2:12, 14; 2 Pet. 3:11-14; 2 Thess. 4:14-18.

That the law of God is a transcript of His character, and is therefore as eternal as God Himself. Psa. 111:7, 8; Psa. 89:34.

That the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, was sanctified and set apart as the Holy Sabbath, and should, therefore, be observed as the day of worship by all Christians. Gen. 2:1-3; Exod. 16:23, 28; 20:8-11.

That the Bible plan of tithing and the giving of offerings by its members is the proper means for the support of the Church. Mal. 3:8-11; Matt. 23:23.

That we are living in "the eleventh hour" of the history of the world, and that the call of the hour is to Negroes to preach the gospel to the world, since, through prejudice and race hatred, and in God's economy of grace, the Gentiles' (white race) time has been fulfilled. Matt. 20:6; 16:21-24.

That the Gentiles, as originally defined by the Bible, were Japhethites, or the white race, and that the terms "Ethiopian," "Egyptian," "Hamite," and "Cushite" are applied to the Negro or black race. Gen. 10:5; Mark 10:33; Rom. 11:11, 25; Isa. 19:23-25; 11:11.

R. Leo Soaries