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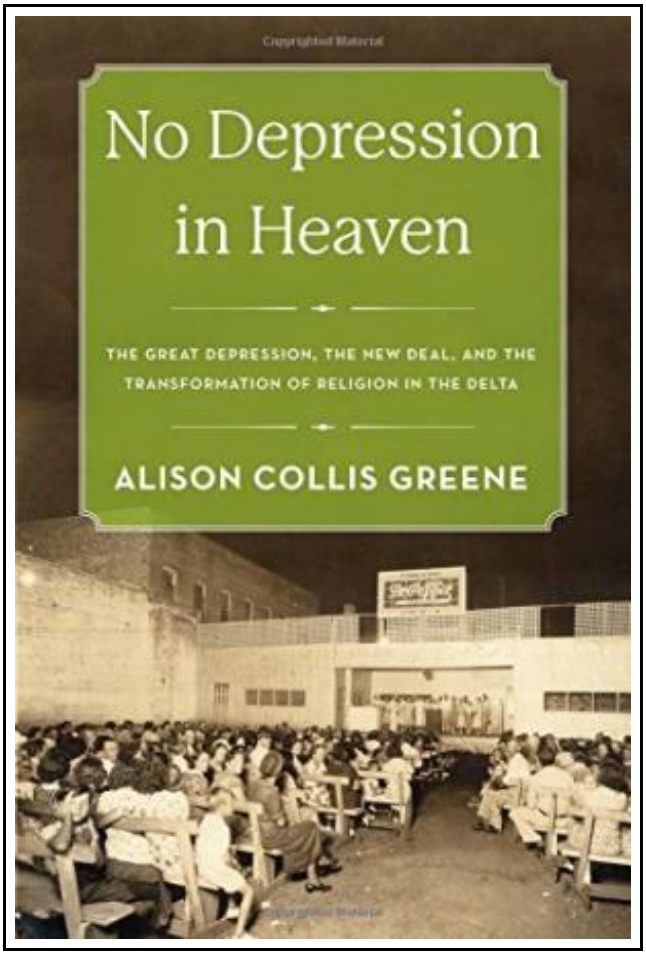


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Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 2016. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 241 x 163 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Until the Great Depression, Americans had traditionally turned to churches and religious agencies when things got tough. But the Depression exposed the inability of the Protestant establishment to alleviate suffering, and it sapped religious leaders ability to define social crisis and compel social change, argues Alison Collis Greene. As the traditional denominations floundered, the New Deal oversaw the transfer of welfare and reform from church to state. Faced with their shortcomings, religious leaders adapted their theological imperatives to redefine the church s role in society. Although the Protestant establishment retained a central role in American life for decades after the Depression, its slip from power made room for others in American religious life. By the end of the Great Depression, mainstream Protestant denominations had moved from a central institutional role in American life to a tangential one. Upstart Pentecostals and independent evangelicals emphasized personal rather than social salvation, and they flourished. Their individualist message and streamlined institutional apparatus served them well through both the years of crisis and the prosperity that followed. This revised award-winning Yale dissertation brings to life the distinct but intersecting worlds of black and white Americans during the Depression. A collapsing cotton economy, alternating floods and droughts, and racial stratification meant that hard times came early and stayed late in Memphis and the Delta. By 1929, the region teetered on the brink of crisis and churches could no longer carry the burden. Change came quickly and relentlessly during the 1930s, and this upheaval carved new contours in the religious landscape. The ethnic and theological diversity of Memphis and the Delta included an array of black and white Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians typical to the South,...

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