

Cotton Mather

Biblia Americana

America's First Bible Commentary. A Synoptic Commentary on the Old and New Testaments. Volume 4: Ezra - Psalms Edited by Harry Clark Maddux, Paul Silas Peterson and Reiner Smolinski

[Biblia Americana]

Published in English.

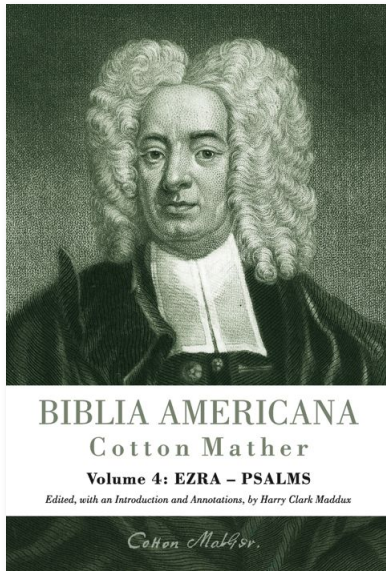
Cotton Mather's synoptic commentary on Ezra through the Psalms contains the core of the massive theological and scholarly endeavor that he called »Biblia Americana.« Here, he links biblical to secular history, analyzes the problem of suffering and evil in creation, and considers the Psalms both as Hebrew poetry and as Christian prophecy. In his annotations on Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, Mather explores topics that range from the philosophical underpinnings of international law to court customs in the Persian Empire to the uneven progress of the reformations attempted by Ezra and Nehemiah. In Job, Mather turns to questions of theodicy and natural philosophy. The Psalms commentary shows his linguistic acumen and his formidable skill as a Christian Hebraist, as well as his sensitivity to difficult matters of hermeneutics. Throughout, he displays the lively wit, curious intellect, and compassionate nature that made him one of the most popular ministers of the colonial period.

Reiner Smolinski Born 1954; 1987 PhD in English and American Studies from The Pennsylvania State University; Professor of Early American Literature and Culture at Georgia State University (Atlanta).

Cotton Mather (1663-1728): The leading New England theologian of his period, Mather was both a defender of Reformed orthodoxy and an intellectual innovator, who propagated the Pietist renewal of Protestantism and embraced ideas of the Early Enlightenment. Best known for his *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), he published more than 400 works in various fields including church history, natural theology, and medicine.

Paul Silas Peterson Born 1979; theological studies in Portland, Edinburgh and Tübingen; Privatdozent Dr. theol., Protestant Faculty of Theology of the University of Tübingen.

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2014. XXIV, 865 pages

ISBN 978-3-16-163501-4
DOI [10.1628/978-3-16-163501-4](https://doi.org/10.1628/978-3-16-163501-4)
eBook PDF €184.00

ISBN 978-3-16-152949-8
cloth €184.00

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