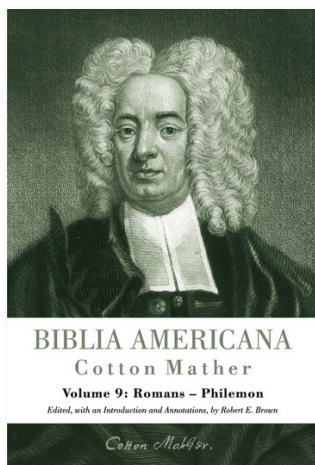


Cotton Mather

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The Pauline epistles provided the theological inspiration for the religious revolution known as the Protestant Reformation, the legacy of which was still being given form during Cotton Mather's lifetime and career. Mather's commentary gives voice to the ongoing struggle between Protestants and Catholics, and between Protestants of many stripes: Puritans and Anglicans, Calvinists and Arminians, Trinitarians and Socinians, Protestants of the state and the sects. In his commentary, he also dwells on eschatological topics, ecclesiology, the papacy, classic doctrines of the Reformation such as faith, grace and election, and perhaps above all, on the piety of practical Christian living.

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**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.

**Robert E. Brown** PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Iowa; Associate Professor of Religious Studies at James Madison University.

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