Mather uses historical and theological reasoning to argue that England will come to dominate North America due to its earliest territorial claims in the western hemisphere and, more significantly, to God’s will that New England will be the “New Jerusalem” after the second coming of Christ.

Venisti Tandem? ¹ Or Discoveries of AMERICA; tending to, and ending in, Discoveries of NEW-ENGLAND.

§ 3. Whatever Truth may be in that Assertion of one who writes; If we may credit any Records besides the Scriptures, I know it might be said and proved well, that this New World was known, and partly inhabited by Britains, or by Saxons from England, Three or Four Hundred Years before the Spaniards coming thither; which Assertion is demonstrated from the Discourses between the Mexicans [Aztecs] and the Spaniards at their first Arrival; and the Popish Reliques [Roman Catholics relics], as well as British terms and words, which the Spaniards then found among the Mexicans, as well as from undoubted Passages, not only in other Authors, but even in the British Annals also: Nevertheless, Mankind generally agree to give unto Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, the Honour of being the First European that opened a way into these Parts of the World. It was in the Year 1492 that this famous Man, acted by a most vehement and wonderful Impulse, was carried into the Northern Regions of this vast Hemisphere, which might more justly therefore have receiv’d its Name from Him, than from Americus Vespinitius, a Florentine, who, in the year 1497 made a further Detection [exploration] of the more Southern Regions in this Continent. . . .

¹ “Hast thou come at last?”
§ 4. But indeed the two Cabots, Father and Son,2 under the Commission of our King Henry VII, entering upon their generous Undertakings in the year 1497, made further Discoveries of America, than either Columbus or Vesputius; in regard of which notable Enterprizes, the younger of them had very great Honours by the Crown [King] put upon him, till at length he died in a good Old Age, in which Old Age King Edward VI had allowed him a Honourable Pension. Yea, since the Cabots, employ’d by the King of England, made a Discovery of this continent in the year 1497, and it was the year 1498 before Columbus discovered any part of the Continent in the Year 1497,3 and it was the Year 1498 before Columbus discovered any part of the Continent; and Vesputius came a considerable time after both of them; I know not why the Spaniard should go unrivall’d in the claim of this New World, which from the first finding of it is pretended unto. These Discoveries of the Cabots were the Foundation of all the Adventures, with which the English Nation have since followed the Sun, and served themselves into an Acquaintance on the hither side of the Atlantick Ocean. And now I shall drown my reader with my self in a tedious Digression, if I enumerate all the Attempts made by a Willoughby, a Frobisher, a Gilbert, and besides many others, an Incomparable Rawleigh, to settle English Colonies in the Desarts of the Western India [West Indies, i.e., the western hemisphere]. It will be enough if I entertain him with the History of that English Settlement, which may, upon a Thousand accounts, pretend unto more of True English than all the rest, and which alone therefore has been called New-England. . . .

Mather reviews the English explorations along the Atlantic coast in the 1500s as well as the theory of the Asiatic origins of North America’s native inhabitants.

§ 6. . . instead of reciting the many Adventures of the English to visit these Parts of the World, I shall but repeat the Words of one Captain [George] Weymouth, an Historian, as well as an Undertaker [participant] of those Adventures; who Reports, That one main End of all these Undertakings, was to plant the Gospel in these dark Regions of America. How well the most of the English Plantations [colonies] have answered this main End, it mainly becomes them to consider: However, I am now to tell Mankind, that as for One of these English Plantations [i.e., Massachusetts Bay] this was not only a main End, but the sole End upon which it was erected. If they that are solicitous about the Interests of the Gospel, would know what and where that Plantation is; be it noted, that all the vast Country from Florida to Nova-Francia [New France/Canada], was at first

2 John and Sebastian Cabot: Venetian navigators (Giovanni and Sebastiano Caboto) who sailed for England. John Cabot is the first post-Columbus explorer who (possibly) landed on the North American continent, having made landfall (perhaps) on Nova Scotia in 1497.

3 Columbus’s first continental landing was in 1498 in South America (present-day Venezuela). He never landed on the North American continent.
called Virginia; but this Virginia was distinguished [divided] into North Virginia and South Virginia, till that famous Traveller Captain John Smith, in the year 1614, presenting unto the Court of England a Draught [map] of North Virginia, got it called by the Name of NEW-ENGLAND; which Name has been ever since allowed unto my Country, as unto the most Resembling Daughter, to the chief Lady of the European World. Thus the Discoveries of the Country proceeded so far, that K[ing] James I did by his Letters Patents under the Great Seal of England, in the 18th Year of his Reign, give and grant unto a certain Honourable Council Established at Plymouth, in the County of Devon, for the Planting, Ruling, and Ordering, and Governing of New-England in America, and to their Successors and Assigns, all that part of America, lying and being in Breadth, from Forty Degrees of Northerly Latitude, from the Equinoctial Line [equator], to the Forty-Eighth Degree of the said Northerly Latitude Inclusively; and the Length of, and within all the Breadth aforesaid, throughout all the firm Lands from Sea to Sea. This at last is the Spot of Earth, which the God of Heaven Spied out for the Seat of such Evangelical, and Ecclesiastical, and very remarkable Transactions, as require to be made an History; here 'twas that our Blessed Jesus intended a Resting Place, must I say? Or only an Hiding Place for those Reformed CHURCHES, which have given him a little Accomplishment of his Eternal Father’s Promise unto him; to be, we hope, yet further accomplished, of having the utmost Parts of the Earth for his Possession?

§ 7. The Learned Joseph Mede 4 conjectures that the American Hemisphere will escape the Conflagration of the Earth, which we expect at the descent of our Lord JESUS CHRIST from Heaven: and that the People here will not have a share in the Blessedness which the Renovated World shall enjoy, during the Thousand Years of Holy Rest promised unto the Church of God: and that the Inhabitants of these Regions, who were originally Scytheans, 5 and therein a notable fulfilment of the Prophecy about the Enlargement of Japhet, will be the Gog and Magog whom the Devil will seduce to Invade the New-Jerusalem, 6 with an Envious Hope to gain the Angelical Circumstances of the People there. All this is but Conjecture; and it may be 'twill [it will] appear unto some as little probable, . . . that by Gog and Magog are meant the Devils and the Damned, which he [Mede] thinks will be let loose at the end of the Thousand Years, to make a furious, but a fruitless Attempt on the glorified Saints of the New-Jerusalem. However, I am going to give unto the Christian Reader an History of some feeble Attempts made in the American Hemisphere to anticipate the State of the New-Jerusalem, as far as the unavoidable Vanity of Humane [human] Affairs and Influence of Satan upon them would allow of it; and of many worthy Persons whose Posterity, if they make a Squadron in the Fleets of Gog and Magog, will be Apostates deserving a Room, and a Doom with the Legions of the Grand Apostate, that will deceive the Nations to that Mysterious Enterprize.

4 Anglican scholar and theologian.
5 Mather and others considered the Indians, having come from Asia, to be descendents of the Scythians.
6 Related to millennial prophecies in the Bible (Ezekiel 38-39 and Revelation 20:7-8) of an earthly city where believers will spend eternity with God after the final judgment.