

"*The Evil Creator* is a thoughtful and historically-responsible reading of the Bible. Examining the Creator Deity of the Bible through the lens of various early Christian interpreters who themselves long ago identified many of the same concerns that modern interpreters struggle with today makes this book not only a valuable contribution to the field of Biblical Studies but also important for modern readers who ponder the God of the Bible."

, Illinois Wesleyan University

"David Litwa is to be congratulated for this book, which is both well-researched and thought-provoking. He compellingly delineates here how the idea of an inferior creator-God arose directly from what was said in some of the earliest and, for many, sacred Christian texts, including Paul's letters and the Gospel of John."

, author of *Beyond Gnosticism:*

*Myth, Lifestyle, and Society in the School of Valentinus*

"Readers interested in why so many ancient Christians concluded that the creator was evil have here in one book an extremely well-researched assemblage and exposition of evidence suggesting answers. Litwa reviews the role of indigenous Egyptian myth, Graeco-Roman philosophical argument, and above all, interpretations of Jewish and Christian scripture. His sobering concluding chapter reviews how ancient evil-creator doctrines live on today. An important contribution on a perennial theological challenge."

, University of Washington, Seattle

This book examines the origins of the evil creator idea chiefly in light of early Christian biblical interpretations. It is divided into two parts. In Part I, the focus is on the interpretations of Exodus and John. Firstly, ancient Egyptian assimilation of the Jewish god to the evil deity Seth-Typhon is studied to understand its reapplication by Phibionite and Sethian Christians to the Judeo-catholic creator. Secondly, the Christian reception of John 8:44 (understood to refer to the devil's father) is shown to implicate the Judeo-catholic creator in murdering Christ. Part II focuses on Marcionite Christian biblical interpretations. It begins with Marcionite interpretations of the creator's character in the Christian "Old Testament," analyzes 2 Corinthians 4:4 (in which "the god of this world" blinds people from Christ's glory), examines Christ's so-called destruction of the Law (Eph 2:15) and the Lawgiver, and shows how Christ finally succumbs to the "curse of the Law" inflicted by the creator (Gal 3:13). A concluding chapter shows how still today readers of the Christian Bible have concluded that the creator manifests an evil character.

**M. DAVID LITWA** is a scholar of ancient Mediterranean religions with a focus on early Christianity. He has taught courses at the University of Virginia, the College of William & Mary, and Virginia Tech. He is the author of recent publications including *Desiring Divinity*, *How the Gospel Became History: Jesus and Mediterranean Myth*, and *Posthuman Transformation in Ancient Mediterranean Thought: Becoming Angels and Demons*. He is currently Research Fellow at the Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne.