

Judging or Ruling the Twelve Tribes of Israel? The Sense of κρίνω in Matthew 19.28

The Bible Translator
2015, Vol. 66(2) 138–150
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DOI: 10.1177/2051677015590813
tbt.sagepub.com



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Abstract

Commentators are divided about whether κρίνω in Matt 19.28 means “to judge” or “to rule.” This study seeks to discern its specific sense in this verse by exploring the semantic domains of the syntagmatic contexts in which κρίνω is used in the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (besides Matt 19.28; Luke 22.30) and by considering the intertextual and literary contexts of Matt 19.28. The study concludes that the sense of κρίνω in Matt 19.28 is “to judge” rather than “to rule.”

Keywords

semantic domain, syntagmatic context, LXX, intertextuality, Daniel 7, literary context, κρίνω, Matt 19.28, Luke 22.30

I. Introduction

While most English translations and commentaries translate κρίνω in Matt 19.28 (cf. Luke 22.30) as “to judge,” there is a debate among commentators as to whether it carries the sense “to rule,” in addition to or as opposed to the sense “to judge.”¹ For example, France notes, “In NT Greek there is no other example of the verb ‘judge’ being used in the sense of ‘rule,’ so that

¹ While this study supposes that Matt 19.28 and Luke 22.30 belong to the same Jesus tradition, it focuses on Matt 19.28. The findings of this study, however, are also relevant to Luke 22.30.

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the normal sense of the verb should probably be understood here” (2007, 744). Luz argues, “That κρίνω could mean ‘to rule’ is a philological fiction that is clearly false” (2001, 517). In contrast, Davies and Allison conclude, “[Matt] 19.28 envisages the twelve disciples entering ‘into God’s kingly power by themselves becoming rulers’” (1997, 3:56). While noting that “the judgment of Israel probably implies both sharing in final judgment and ruling in the world to come,” Turner concludes, “Although some take κρίνοντες in 19.28 to be speaking of the condemnation of unbelieving Jews at the final judgment, it seems more likely that eschatological rule or governing is meant” (2008, 475-76; see Matt 20.20-21).

The goal of this study is to discern the sense of κρίνω in Matt 19.28—the meaning intended by the author. This study accepts two of Louw and Nida’s basic assumptions about the lexical semantics of language. First, “the correct meaning of a word within any context is the meaning which fits the context best” (1992, 12).² Second, “if the context does not suggest two or more meanings of a word, one should assume that in any one context a lexeme has a single meaning” (1992, 11). This study aims to achieve its goal by exploring three different contexts: the syntagmatic, intertextual, and literary contexts.³ First, I will investigate the semantic domains of κρίνω in its syntagmatic contexts in the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (besides Matt 19.28; Luke 22.30). Second, I will point out the strong intertextuality between Matt 19.28 and Dan 7. Third, I will discuss the literary context of Matt 19.16-30. As we will see shortly, these contexts help us to discern the sense of κρίνω in Matt 19.28.

2. Syntagmatic contexts

In the following, I identify the distinctive semantic domains of κρίνω in its syntagmatic contexts in the four particular bodies of Koine Greek literature:

² Moo also highlights this major principle of modern linguistics—“meaning is found not in individual words, as vital as they are, but in larger clusters: phrases, clauses, sentences, discourses” (2015, 9).

³ When discussing “the types and functions of contexts in understanding texts,” Nida mentions “syntagmatic contexts” and “the context of a source text” (2001, 31-41). Although collocation is another effective way to explore the meaning of a word, apart from Matt 19.20 and Luke 22.30, κρίνω rarely occurs with the phrase τὰς δώδεκα φυλάς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. In Second Temple Judaism, as we can imagine, it is usually Israel judging/ruling the Gentile nations in the end-time. Hagner observes, “The idea of an eschatological ‘judging’ (κρίνοντες) of the φυλάς λαοῦ, ‘tribes of the people,’ is found in *Pss. Sol.* 17.26 (cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17.29)” (1995, 565). The psalmist refers to υἱὸς Δαυὶδ (“the son of David”) in *Pss. Sol.* 17.21 and λαὸς ἅγιος (“a holy people”) in *Pss. Sol.* 17.26. The messianic king’s judgment in *Pss. Sol.* 17.26 concerns Israel and that in *Pss. Sol.* 17.29 concerns λαοὶ καὶ ἔθνη—other peoples and nations.

the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (besides Matt 19.28; Luke 22.30). Although they represent a very small part of Koine Greek literature, they are more closely related to Matthew than others.⁴ What is most crucial in the following analyses is to observe the emergence of the overall patterns of the semantic domains of κρίνω.

2.1 Semantic domains of κρίνω in the Septuagint

The verb κρίνω is attested 245 times in the LXX (apart from the *Odes of Solomon*). Assuming that it carries one sense in each syntagmatic context, I have identified up to twelve semantic domains:

- (a) “to judge (in a dispute)” (114)⁵
- (b) “to punish” (29)⁶
- (c) “to decide, determine” (24)⁷
- (d) “to dispute, go to court” (21)⁸
- (e) “to defend” (18)⁹

⁴ Both Philo and Josephus are first-century A.D. Jewish writers who attempted to explain Jewish faith to others in a way similar to the way in which Matthew tried to elaborate the Jewish perspective on Jesus’ teaching and life to his readers, although Philo’s and Josephus’s audience were the general public in the Greco-Roman society and Matthew’s audience were the Jewish followers of Jesus.

⁵ Gen 16.5; 18.25; 19.9; 31.53; 49.16; Exod 18.13, 22 (2×), 26 (2×); Lev 19.15; Num 35.24; Deut 1.16, 17; 16.18; 25.1; Judg 3.30; 4.4, 5; 11.27 (2×); 1 Sam 2.10; 1 Kgs 3.9, 28; 7.44; 8.32; 2 Kgs 23.22; 2 Chr 1.10, 11; 6.23; 19.6, 8; Ezra 7.25; Jdt 7.24; Tob 3.2; Pss 7.9; 9.5, 9; 57.2, 12; 66.5; 71.2; 74.3; 81.2, 8; 93.2; 95.10; 97.9 (2×); 108.7; 109.6; Prov 17.15; 29.9, 14; 30.12; 31.8, 9; Eccl 3.17; Job 8.3; 22.13; 23.13; 27.2; 35.14; 36.31; 37.23; Wis 3.8; 6.4; 9.3; 12.10, 13, 18, 21, 22 (2×); Sir 4.9, 15; 8.14; 16.12; 35.18; 45.26; 46.14; *Pss. Sol.* 2.30, 32; 4.11; 8.3, 24, 26; 17.26, 29; Hos 13.10; Mic 3.11; 4.3; Zech 7.9; 8.16; Isa 2.4; 5.3; 11.3, 4; 16.5; Jer 5.28; 11.20; 21.12; 32.17; Ep Jer 63; Ezek 7.5, 14; 11.10, 11; 18.30; 33.20; 34.22; 35.11; Sus 53.

⁶ Gen 15.14; Exod 5.21; 1 Sam 25.39; 2 Chr 20.12; 24.22; 1 Macc 7.42; 2 Macc 6.14; 3 Macc 2.3; Pss 5.11; 9.20; Job 10.2; Wis 11.9; Isa 66.16; Jer 27.34; 28.36; 32.31; Ezek 20.36; 21.35; 22.2; 23.36; 24.14 (3×); 36.19; 38.22; Dan 4.23; Joel 3.2; 3.12; Amos 2.3.

⁷ 2 Chr 24.6; Jdt 2.3; 11.13; 1 Esd 3.9; 8.10; 1 Macc 11.33; 2 Macc 11.25, 26; 13.13, 15; 15.17, 21; 3 Macc 1.6; 2.33; 6.30; Prov 28.25; Wis 8.9; *Pss. Sol.* 8.15; Isa 41.6; Ezek 44.24; Dan 3.10, 96; 4.18; 9.24.

⁸ Gen 26.21; Judg 8.1; 21.22; 2 Sam 19.10; Job 9.3; 13.19; 31.13; 40.4; Ezra 4.9; Pss 36.33; 50.6; 118.154; Prov 23.11; Eccl 6.10; Hos 2.4; Mic 6.1; Isa 43.26; 50.8; Jer 2.9, 35; Lam 3.36.

⁹ Deut 32.36; 1 Sam 24.16; 1 Chr 16.33; Pss 9.39; 53.3; 71.4; 81.3; Prov 22.23; 29.7; 31.5; Job 35.14; Isa 1.17, 23; 19.20; 49.25; 51.22; Jer 22.16; 37.13.

- (f) “to vindicate” (11)¹⁰
- (g) “to seem right” (3)¹¹
- (h) “to rule” (20)¹²
- (i) “to interpret (dreams and visions)” (2)¹³
- (j) “to recognize” (1)¹⁴
- (k) “to be judged as guilty” (1)¹⁵
- (l) “to test, scrutinize” (1)¹⁶

As we can see, *κρίνω* in the LXX is polysemous. Its most typical sense in the LXX is “to judge (in a dispute)” (47 percent of all occurrences). Turner argues, “Although Matthew does not use *κρίνω* with this nuance [‘to rule’] elsewhere (cf. 5.40; 7.1-2), its use in the LXX certainly supports this view in many texts where *κρίνω* renders *שפּט*” (2008, 475-76). Turner lists up to thirty LXX references in support of his claim that *κρίνω* in Matt 19.28 carries the sense “to rule”; however, only a few of them are valid.¹⁷ Although the LXX most frequently translates *שפּט* as *κρίνω* (106 times), it also

¹⁰ Gen 30.6; 2 Sam 18.19, 31; Pss 25.1; 34.24; 42.1; 95.13 (2×); 134.14; Sir 35.23; Lam 3.59.

¹¹ 1 Esd 6.20, 21; 8.90.

¹² Judg 3.10; 10.2, 3; 12.7, 8, 9, 11 (2×), 13, 14; 15.20; 16.31; Ruth 1.1; 1 Sam 4.18; 2 Kgs 15.5; 2 Chr 26.21; Dan 9.12; 1 Macc 9.73; Ps 2.10; Wis 1.1.

¹³ Dan 2.6, 7.

¹⁴ Wis 2.22.

¹⁵ Sir 42.8.

¹⁶ Job 7.18.

¹⁷ Lev 19.15; Deut 1.16-17; 16.18; Judg 3.10; 4.4-5; Ruth 1.1; 1 Kgs 3.9; 2 Chr 1.10; Pss 2.10; 57.2; 71.2, 4; Prov 31.8-9; Zech 7.9; Isa 1.12, 23; Jer 5.28; Ezek 44.24; Dan 9.12; cf. 1 Esd 6.21; 1 Macc 9.73; 11.33; 2 Macc 11.25, 36; 3 Macc 6.30; Wis 1.1; 3.8; Sir 4.9; 42.8; *Pss. Sol.* 17.28; careful examination of the LXX references in Turner’s list shows that, while *κρίνω* renders *שפּט*, most cases attest the sense “to judge” rather than the sense “to rule.” I only accept that *κρίνω* in Judg 3.10; Ruth 1.1; 1 Macc 9.73; Ps 2.10; Wis 1.1; Dan 9.12 means “to rule.” Dan 9.12 provides the strongest case in which “to rule” makes a better sense than “to judge,” in correspondence with *שפּט* in the Hebrew text. Dan 9.12 is a part of Daniel’s intercessory prayer for God’s people Israel. God fulfilled his words of judgment against Israel and against their judges who judged his people unjustly. God brought great evils upon them. Earlier, in Dan 9.7-8, Daniel repents the sins of Israel before God and attributes them to all the Israelites but particularly to their *βασιλεις* (“kings”), *δυναστες* (“mighty ones”), and *πατερες* (“fathers”). Most English translations take *שפּטנו* as “our rulers” (e.g., NRSV, NIV, NJB, NJPS, ESV). In view of *מלך* (“a king”) in Dan 9.8 MT, *שפּט* in Dan 9.12 MT definitely carries the sense “to rule.” In Isa 32.1 LXX, *κρῖσις/κρίνω* clearly contains the sense “to judge,” distinctive from the sense “to rule.” Wis 3.8 also distinguishes *κρίνω* from *κρατέω*.

translates דין (19 times) and ריב (19 times) as κρίνω.¹⁸ In the 18 cases of the 106 cases in which the LXX translates שפט as κρίνω (Judg 3.10; 10.2, 3; 12.7, 8, 9, 11 [2×], 13, 14; 15.20; 16.31; Ruth 1.1; 1 Sam 4.18; 2 Kgs 15.5; 2 Chr 26.21; Dan 9.12; Ps 2.10), it carries the sense “to rule.” However, even in these cases, the sense “to rule” is not completely dissociated from the sense “to judge,” considering Judg 4.4, 5; 1 Kgs 3.9, 28; 2 Chr 1.10; 11, in which the most essential function of judges (שפטים) and the later kings (מלכים) of Israel is highlighted as to carry out fair and righteous judgment for God’s people. It has to do with Israel’s distinctive religious and political identity as the people of Yahweh, who is the ultimate ruler of Israel—cf. 1 Sam 8.7-8. While κρίνω in the LXX is polysemous and sometimes carries the sense “to rule,” it most typically carries the sense “to judge.”

2.2 Semantic domains of κρίνω in Philo

Philo uses κρίνω ninety-eight times in his works, in which I identify the following semantic domains:

- (a) “to recognize, discern, think” (66)¹⁹
- (b) “to judge (in a dispute)” (14)²⁰
- (c) “to decide, determine” (12)²¹

¹⁸ שפט as κρίνω (Gen 16.5; 18.25; 19.9; 31.53; Exod 5.21; 18.13, 16, 22, 26; Num 35.24; Deut 1.16; 16.18; 25.1; Judg 3.10; 4.4, 5; 10.2, 3; 11.27; 12.7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14; 15.20; 16.31; Ruth 1.1; 1 Sam 4.18; 24.16; 2 Sam 18.19, 31; 1 Kgs 3.9, 28; 7.44; 8.32; 2 Kgs 15.5; 23.22; 2 Chr 1.10, 11; 6.23; 19.6, 8; 20.12; 26.21; Pss 2.10; 7.9; 9.5, 9, 20, 39; 25.1; 34.24; 36.33; 42.21; 50.6; 53.3; 57.2, 12; 66.5; 71.4; 74.3; 81.1, 2, 3, 8; 93.2; 95.13; 97.9, 108.7; Prov 29.9, 14; 31.9; Eccl 3.17; Job 8.3; 21.22; 22.13; Mic 4.3; Isa 1.17, 23; 2.4; 5.3; 11.3, 4; 16.5; 43.26; 66.16; Jer 11.20; 32.17; Lam 3.59; Ezek 7.5, 14; 11.10, 11; 18.30; 20.35, 36; 21.30; 22.2; 23.36; 24.14; 33.20; 34.22; 35.11; 36.19; 38.22; 44.24; Dan 9.12; Hos 13.10; Joel 3.2, 12; Amos 2.3; Mic 3.11; 4.3; Zech 7.9; 8.16); דין as κρίνω (Gen 30.6; 49.16; Deut 32.36; 1 Sam 2.10; 2 Sam 19.10; Ezra 7.25; Job 36.31; Pss 7.9; 9.9; 29.7; 71.2; 95.10, 13; 109.6; Eccl 6.10; Jer 5.28; 22.16; 37.13; Hos 2.2); ריב as κρίνω (Gen 26.21; Judg 8.1; 21.22; 1 Sam 25.34; Job 9.3; 10.2; 13.19; 31.13; 40.4; Ps 118.154; Prov 22.23; 23.11; Isa 19.20; 49.25; 50.8; 51.22; Jer 2.9; 27.34; Mic 6.1).

¹⁹ *Creation* 120; *Alleg. Interp.* 1:99; 2:16, 17; 3:57, 71, 119, 123, 140, 209; *Sacrifices* 138; *Giants* 37; *Unchangeable* 5, 105, 106, 113, 163; *Drunkenness* 87, 172 (2×), 176, 193; *Heir* 7, 71, 89 (3×), 90, 157; *Prelim. Studies* 5, 21 (3×), 27, 176; *Dreams* 2:227; *Moses* 1:83, 329; 2:36, 273; *Spec. Laws* 1:57, 316; 2:76, 227; 3:87, 119; 4:46, 61; *Virtues* 2, 19, 223; *Rewards* 112; *Good Person* 11, 77, 114; *Contempl. Life* 34; *Eternity* 40; *Embassy* 118, 218, 277, 286; *QG* 1:70; 3:3, 29; 4:211, 227.

²⁰ *Alleg. Interp.* 2:94; *Cherubim* 11; *Prelim. Studies* 153; *Joseph* 72; *Moses* 2:217; *Spec. Laws* 1:121, 277; 4:57 (2×), 70, 71 (2×), 169; *Embassy* 335.

²¹ *Unchangeable* 108; *Names* 91, 141; *Moses* 1:251; *Spec. Laws* 3:54; 4:173, 189; *Virtues* 62; *Rewards* 87; *Flaccus* 2, 158; *Embassy* 3.

- (d) “to punish, condemn” (4)²²
- (e) “to seem right” (1)²³
- (f) “to accuse” (1)²⁴

As we can see, *κρίνω* in the works of Philo is polysemous. Its most typical sense is “to recognize, discern, think” (67 percent of all occurrences). This makes sense, considering Philo’s heavily philosophical orientation. Philo never uses it in the sense “to rule.”

2.3 Semantic domains of *κρίνω* in Josephus

Josephus uses *κρίνω* 194 times in his works, in which I identify the following semantic domains:

- (a) “to recognize, discern, think” (86)²⁵
- (b) “to decide, determine” (70)²⁶
- (c) “to judge (in a dispute)” (23)²⁷
- (d) “to interpret and explain (dreams and visions)” (8)²⁸
- (e) “to vindicate” (2)²⁹
- (f) “to accuse someone” (2)³⁰
- (g) “to appoint” (1)³¹

²² *Worse* 68; *Migration* 113; *Heir* 272; *Good Person* 108.

²³ *Alleg. Interp.* 3:20.

²⁴ *Embassy* 360.

²⁵ *Ant.* 1:68, 230, 284, 326; 2:42, 47, 108, 242; 3:45, 190 (2×), 201, 219; 4:34, 103, 114, 148, 193, 217, 324; 6:137, 159, 281, 304, 319, 348; 7:33, 150, 192, 224; 8:173; 9:212; 10:272; 11:32, 58, 139; 12:109, 403, 405; 13:79, 114, 127, 151, 188, 224, 299; 14:305, 484; 15:29, 31, 208; 17:116, 124, 192, 256; 18:76, 270, 323, 333, 342; 19:24, 82, 121, 289 (2×), 302, 327, 334; 20:27, 166; *J.W.* 1:332, 386, 525; 2:205, 207; 4:415, 631; 5:46, 420; 6:134, 362; 7:322; *Life* 219, 240; *Ag. Ap.* 1:4; 2:211.

²⁶ *Ant.* 1:116, 196, 266, 300; 2:28, 139, 220; 3:300; 4:7, 19, 23, 31, 33; 4:191; 5:95; 6:13, 31, 153; 7:128, 147, 235, 270, 277, 283, 334; 8:276; 9:60, 75; 10:253; 11:73, 267, 276, 319; 12:127, 140; 13:169, 301; 14:200, 221, 235 (2×), 431; 15:193; 16:381; 18:12, 278, 298, 303; 19:27, 65, 202; 20:41, 73, 84; *J.W.* 1:355; 2:523; 3:131, 377; 4:573; 5:408; 6:281, 284; 7:455; *Life* 30, 35, 63, 68, 104, 146, 237.

²⁷ *Ant.* 1:96; 3:72; 5:184; 6:32; 8:23, 134; 9:3; 14:172; 15:4, 16; 18:107, 226; 19:314; 20:132; *J.W.* 1:210, 622 (2×); 3:482; 4:266, 267; 5:386; *Life* 256, 430.

²⁸ *Ant.* 2:11; 5:220; 10:217, 234, 246 (2×); *J.W.* 6:291, 315.

²⁹ *Ant.* 4:247; 9:65.

³⁰ *J.W.* 1:452; 4:341.

³¹ *Ant.* 3:70.

- (h) “to seem right” (1)³²
- (i) “to test, scrutinize” (1)³³

As we can see, κρίνω in the works of Josephus is polysemous. Its two most typical senses are “to decide, determine” and “to recognize, discern, think.” Josephus never uses it in the sense “to rule.”

2.4 Semantic domains of κρίνω in the New Testament

In the New Testament (besides Matt 19.28; Luke 22.30) κρίνω appears 103 times, in which I identify the following semantic domains:

- (a) “to judge (in a dispute)” (77)³⁴
- (b) “to punish, condemn” (15)³⁵
- (c) “to decide, determine” (14)³⁶
- (d) “to recognize” (5)³⁷
- (e) “to dispute, go to court” (2)³⁸

As we can see, κρίνω in the New Testament is polysemous. Its most typical sense is “to judge (in a dispute)” (75 percent of all occurrences). France is right to point out that κρίνω is never used in the sense “to rule” elsewhere in the New Testament (2007, 744).

2.5 Summary

We have observed that κρίνω in the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (excluding Matt 19.28; Luke 22.30) is polysemous. Its two most typical senses are “to judge (in a dispute)” and “to recognize, discern, think.” It carries the sense “to rule” in a number of passages in the LXX

³² Ant. 1:225.

³³ Ant. 7:101.

³⁴ Matt 7.1 (2×), 2 (2×); Luke 6.37 (2×); 12.57; 19.22; John 5.22, 30; 7.24 (2×), 51; 8.15 (2×), 16, 50; 12.47 (2×), 48 (2×); 18.31; Acts 7.7; 13.27; 17.31; 23.3, 6; 24.21; 25.9, 10, 20; 26.6; Rom 2.1 (3×), 3, 12, 16; 3.4, 6; 14.3 (2×), 4; 14.10, 13; 1 Cor 4.5; 5.3, 12 (2×), 13; 6.1, 2 (2×), 3; 10.15, 29; 11.13, 31, 32; Col 2.16; 2 Tim 4.1; Heb 10.30; Jas 2.12; 4.11 (3×), 12; 1 Pet 1.17; 2.23; 4.5, 6; Rev 11.18; 16.5; 19.11; 20.12, 13.

³⁵ John 3.17, 18 (2×); 8.26; 16.11; Rom 2.27; 3.7; 14.22; 2 Thess 2.12; Heb 13.14; Jas 5.9; Rev 6.10; 18.8, 20; 19.2.

³⁶ Luke 7.43; Acts 3.13; 4.19; 13.46; 15.19; 16.4, 20.16; 21.25; 25.25; 27.1; 1 Cor 2.2; 7.37; 2 Cor 2.1; Titus 3.12.

³⁷ Acts 16.15; 26.8; Rom 14.5 (2×); 2 Cor 5.14.

³⁸ Matt 5.40; 1 Cor 6.6.

but nowhere in Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament. Its unusual sense “to rule” in the LXX originates from the multiple semantic domains of the Hebrew verb *טפַשׁ* and the various functions of the judges (*סֹפֵטִים*) in the history of Israel, which included political, military, and religious roles in addition to their judicial role. The Greek translators of the LXX formulaically translate *טפַשׁ* as *κρίνω*, even when the Hebrew verb carries the sense “to rule.” In their translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, they stretch the common semantic domains of *κρίνω*, possibly to extend the parallelism in Hebrew between *טפַשׁ* (cf. *κριτής*) and *טפַשׁ* (cf. *κρίνω*) even to Greek.³⁹ While the LXX frequently renders *טפַשׁ* as *κρίνω*, such a fact alone does not prove that Matthew uses *κρίνω* in Matt 19.28 in the sense “to rule.” As we will see shortly, *κρίνω* in Matt 19.28 carries its typical meaning, “to judge,” when we take into account the intertextual and literary context of Matt 19.28.

3. Intertextual context

As Nida notes, “The meaning of a text may depend in large measure on some completely different text, often spoken of as a process of intertextuality” (2001, 38). Virtually every commentator recognizes the intertextuality of Dan 7 LXX and Matt 19.28. There are multiple verbal and thematic parallels between the two texts. First, the phrase *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* (“the Son of Man”) clearly refers to the “one like a son of man” (*ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου*) in Dan 7.13. Second, the imagery of the Son of Man sitting on his throne of glory (*ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ*) evokes the enthronement of the “one like a son of man” in the heavenly throne room vision in Dan 7.13-14. When this heavenly figure came upon the clouds of heaven and approached “the Ancient of Days” with his attendants, “to him was given the dominion and the honor and the kingship, and all peoples, tribes, languages shall be subject [to] him” (LXX-Θ).⁴⁰ Third, the reference to “twelve thrones” alludes to the multiple thrones (*θρόνοι*) in Dan 7.9, separate from the throne on which the Ancient of Days himself sits. Fourth, the Son of Man sitting (*καθίζω*) with his followers to judge in the heavenly court echoes the imagery of the court sitting (*καθίζω*) in judgment in Dan 7.10 (*κριτήριον*), 26 (*κρίσις* LXX-OG; *κριτήριον* LXX-Θ).

³⁹ In terms of semantic relations, while I identify “disjunction” between *κρίνω* and verbs such as *ἄρχω*, *βασιλεύω*, *κυριεύω*, or *κρατέω*, I identify “identity” or “inclusion” between the semantic domains of *טפַשׁ* in the MT and those of *κρίνω* in the LXX (cf. Cruse 1986, 86-88).

⁴⁰ While LXX-Θ attests *ἡ τιμὴ* in Dan 7.14, LXX-OG has *πᾶσα δόξα* in parallel. (Note: I am using *NETS* as my English translation of the LXX in this study.)

These significant intertextual connections help us to discern the sense of κρῖνω in Matt 19.28. As Nolland suggests, “The relationship here between the role of the Son of Man and the Twelve is likely inspired by the paralleling in Dan 7 of a Son of Man and the Saints of the Most High (esp. cf. vv. 14 and 27)” (2005, 801).⁴¹ As France observes, “Consistently with the imagery of Dan 7 the function of the enthroned disciples is to judge, but whereas in Dan 7 the son-of-man figure represented Israel itself exercising judgment over other nations, now it is Israel that is being judged” (2007, 744). Nolland also points out that “the idea that the messiah would be involved in judging Israel has little place in Jewish tradition, but the Qumran community would have been at home with the idea since it considered Jewish life to be largely under the control of the forces of darkness”; e.g., 1QpHab V, 3; 1QS VIII, 7 (2005, 801).

One may argue that Dan 7.13-14 suggests rather the “one like a son of man” exercising rule or dominion. While his rule or dominion is expressed by words like ἐξουσία and βασιλεία (v. 14), a few verses earlier, his role as the judge in the heavenly court is specified by the phrase κριτήριον ἐκάθισε καὶ βίβλοι ἠνεώχθησαν (v. 10). While in Dan 7 the eschatological rewards of “the holy ones (of the Most High)” include both judging (v. 26) and ruling (vv. 18, 27), a judicial noun such as κρίσις or κριτήριον distinctively expresses the former and the noun βασιλεία and verb βασιλεύω express the latter.⁴² No one denies the obvious lexical association between κρίσις/κριτήριον and κρῖνω. When Matthew alludes to Dan 7 and uses κρῖνω in 19.28, he refers to the specific role of the “one like a son of man” as the heavenly judge (cf. κριτήριον in v. 10) and that of the holy people of the Most High as the members of the heavenly court (cf. κρίσις LXX-OG; κριτήριον LXX-Θ in v. 26). A similar intertextual argument can be made for Luke 22.30. When Luke alludes to Dan 7 and uses κρῖνω in Luke 22.30, he refers to the Son of Man’s and his followers’ eschatological reign by the noun βασιλεία, but he specifically refers to their eschatological judgment by the verb κρῖνω.

⁴¹ Collins classifies modern interpretations of the “one like a human being” into three categories—(a) “an exalted human being,” (b) “a collective symbol,” and (c) “a heavenly being.” Collins identifies the “one like a human being” with the archangel Michael (1993, 304-10). I support (b), because an angel interprets Daniel’s dream of four beasts (Dan 7.1-14) in Dan 7.15-28, in which the “one like a human being” corresponds with and represents “the holy ones of the Most High.”

⁴² While admitting the influence of Dan 7.9-27 on Matt 19.28, Davies and Allison argue that κρῖνω in Matt 19.28 carries the sense “to rule,” because “in Daniel the saints of the Most High take possession of the kingdom and *govern*” (1997, 56). They seem to overlook the noun κρίσις/κριτήριον—related to κρῖνω—in the context (Dan 7.9-27). Lee points out that Paul focuses on the saints’ judging function in 1 Cor 6.2 and their ruling function in Rom 5.17 (2012, 113-17).

Also, the verbal correspondence between Matt 19.28 and 25.31 supports the suggestion that κρίνω in Matt 19.28 means “to judge.” In the Parable of the Judgment of the Nations (Matt 25.31-46), Matthew alludes to the heavenly court in Dan 7 by the phrase τότε καθίσει ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ (Matt 25.31). Considering the verbal correspondence between Matt 19.28 and 25.31—(a) ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, (b) ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ, and (c) καθίζω—κρίνω in Matt 19.28 means “to judge” rather than “to rule.” When we consider the strong intertextuality between Dan 7 and Matt 19.28 and the verbal correspondence between Matt 19.28 and 25.31 due to their shared allusion to Dan 7, we can conclude that κρίνω in Matt 19.28 carries the sense “to judge.”

4. Literary context

As Silva notes, “When biblical exegetes appeal to the context in support of an interpretation, it is not the syntactical combinations that they usually have in mind, but rather the general tenor of the passage. It is useful to point out, however, that these two factors represent different gradations of the same phenomenon, not qualitatively different phenomena” (1983, 143). Matt 19.28-30 is the conclusion of the pericope concerning the rich young man (Matt 19.16-30) who came to Jesus and asked, “What good thing must I do to get eternal life?” (Matt 19.16).⁴³ Jesus told him to obey Moses’ commandments and he answered that he already did. Jesus replied, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me” (Matt 19.21). The rich young man heard this and went away, looking sad, because he owned great wealth. The story continues in Matt 19.23-30:

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astounded and said, “Then who can be saved?” But Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.” Then Peter said in reply, “Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

⁴³ I use NRSV as my English translation of the New Testament in this study.

The eschatological reward of Jesus' twelve disciples who have forsaken everything to follow him is to sit with the Son of Man on the throne of his glory and to judge the twelve tribes of Israel on twelve thrones. As we have observed, Matt 19.28 shows strong intertextual links with the heavenly vision of the enthronement of the Son of Man in Dan 7. Alluding to Dan 7.26-27, Jesus announces here that his twelve disciples, who have forsaken everything to follow him, would share the Son of Man's authority to judge nations, including the nation of Israel.⁴⁴ The twelve disciples whom Jesus has called "brothers" (Matt 12.48-50) represent the church, who are a new Israel and "the holy ones of the Most High" in Dan 7.26-27.⁴⁵ Jesus' disciples who have forsaken everything to follow him contrast with the twelve tribes of Israel who have forsaken following him to hold onto their status quo, exemplified by the rich young man in the pericope. The action of the former will judge the action of the latter. Matthew has in mind here the great reversal of one's status in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 18.4).⁴⁶ Jesus' disciples are the weak and poor in the present world order—the "little ones" (Matt 10.42; 11.25; 18.3, 5, 6, 10, 14; 19.14)—in contrast to the rich young man.

In the kingdom of heaven, however, the status of Jesus' humble disciples and that of Israel's powerful leaders is reversed. We witness a similar reversal later in the Gospel. During Jesus' trial at the Sanhedrin in Matt 26.57-68, the high priest asks him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God" (v. 63), and he replies, "You have said so. But I tell you, From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (v. 64). Jesus clearly identifies himself with the "one like a son of man" in Dan 7.13. Although the Sanhedrin (which represents Israel) is judging the Son of Man with false accusations now, a great reversal will happen shortly when the

⁴⁴ Matthew unequivocally identifies the Son of Man with Jesus himself (Matt 8.20; 9.6; 11.19; 12.40; 13.37; 16.13; 17.9, 12, 22; 20.18, 28; 24.3; 26.2, 24).

⁴⁵ Osborne comments, "Peter and the Twelve are corporately identified with the church and so symbolize all the saints, and in [Matt] 25.31-46 and 1 Cor 6.2 it is the world that is judged . . . v. 29 connects these promises with 'everyone' in the church as the new Israel" (2010, 722). Considering that Judas, one of the Twelve, betrays Jesus, "the twelve thrones" in Matt 19.28 clearly refer to the identity of the church, the faithful followers of Jesus Christ, rather than the Twelve as individuals *per se*.

⁴⁶ Hagner similarly notes, "The twelve disciples, representing the true Israel, will thus be vindicated before unbelieving Israel by assuming authority over them. . . . The disciples, who have given up everything now and appear insignificant, can expect in the future to become powerful figures of rule and authority" (1995, 565). One of the reasons Davies and Allison support the notion that κρινω in Matt 19.28 has the sense "to rule" is that "there is no parallel to the idea that Israel will be gathered only to be condemned. . . . The restoration of the lost tribes was a great eschatological hope, beginning with the OT itself" (1997, 56). They do not seem to consider *Pss. Sol.* 17.26, 29 and the immediate literary context of Matt 19.28 about the rich young man (Matt 19.16-30).

Son of Man will judge the Sanhedrin. Jesus' faithful followers will also participate in the Messiah's judgment and righteous rule. As Harrington notes, "The twelve disciples share in Jesus' glory and his task as judge. There is no reason to interpret the twelve tribes of Israel as a symbol for the Church. Matthew meant Israel" (2007, 278-79). When we consider the immediate literary context of Matt 19.28, it is clear that κρίνω carries the sense "to judge."

5. Conclusion

While the majority of commentators translate κρίνω in Matt 19.28 (cf. Luke 22.30) as "to judge," there are some scholars who argue that it carries the sense "to rule." This study has sought to discern the sense of κρίνω in Matt 19.28 by exploring three different contexts: syntagmatic, intertextual, and literary. The verb κρίνω in the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (besides Matt 19.28 and Luke 22.30) is polysemous. Its most typical senses include "to judge (in a dispute)" and "to recognize, discern, think." It also carries the sense "to rule" in a number of passages in the LXX but never in Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament (besides Matt 19.28 and Luke 22.30). Its unique sense "to rule" in the LXX has to do with the semantic domains of the Hebrew verb שפט and the multifaceted role of the judges (שפטים) in the Old Testament, which includes both judging and ruling. The Greek translators of the LXX formulaically translate שפט as κρίνω, even when שפט means "to rule." The intertextual and literary contexts of Matt 19.28 support the conclusion that the sense of κρίνω is "to judge" rather than "to rule."

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Abbreviations and Bible versions cited

ESV	English Standard Version (2001)
LXX	Septuagint
LXX-OG	Old Greek
LXX-Θ	Theodotion
NETS	<i>New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> (see Pietermsa and Wright 2007)
NIV	New International Version (1978)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible (1985)
NJPS	Tanakh (New Jewish Publication Society Version, 1985)
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version (1989)