

***Kerkbode* articles about the new Bible translation,
in the 20 April 2012 edition**

*1.0 Spacing
7 Pages*

In a nutshell...

The battle to maintain the honourable position of Christ in the Old Testament has been raging for decades in our country.

The translation of the new Afrikaans Bible translation to be published in 2016 or later, causes this battle to become more current. In total more than 140 theologians and literary persons collaborate in this new Bible translation. The Bible translators once more want to write the **Names of Christ, for example *God, Lord, Son (of God), King, Priest, Prophet and Messiah* in lower case letters** in the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament.

In the articles which were published in the 20 April 2012 edition of *Kerkbode*, *Kerkbode* sides with the Bible translators and the Bible Society in favour of the use of lower case letters.

In response thereto this document was written. Here the following are stated inter alia:

- All the members of congregations and a large number of ministers want upper case. Thus only a small percentage opts for lower case – and the theologians were the ones who fell for the false theology which brought about the use of lower case letters.
- In most of the English Bible translations the Names of Christ are written in upper case in the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. In the minority of English Bible translations the pronouns (for example *He, Him* and *His*) appear in upper case.
- The Bible translators take a false point of departure by alleging that the original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) should be translated into Afrikaans without the dogma (message) of the Bible (namely the Gospel) being shown in the Bible translation as well.
- The result is that at present many of our spiritual leaders (many theologians) are deceiving the Afrikaans-speaking believers. Everyone has a duty to protest against this and to battle for the truth.

The 20 April 2012 edition of *Kerkbode* contained articles about the new Bible translation, to be published in 2016 or later. In reaction thereto I sent a letter to *Kerkbode* to be posted on their webpage. Afterwards I expanded this letter into this document.

This document (as well as the document titled: *A Problem with Bible Translations*) was submitted to rev Kritzinger (the executive head of the Bible Society) and prof Combrink (translation project leader of this new Bible) before and during our meeting and discussion on 2 May 2012.

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The purpose of this letter is a fair battle for the cause of honour.

As I was aware that the 20 April edition of *Kerkbode* would contain some articles on the new Afrikaans Bible translation, I looked forward to those. However, a number of disappointments awaited me.

The problem concerned especially the articles with regard to the lower case/upper case battle for the new Afrikaans Bible translation. It is clear that *Kerkbode* sides with those in favour of lower case letters. It became clear also from the heading of the article about this (on page 4) that those in favour of upper case letters are made out to be “protestors.”

Now the question is: “Is it possible to write the Names of Christ in the Old Testament in lower case?” At first glance this sounds very strange.

The lower case tendency is a monstrous threat. Here the honour of Christ is at stake. Our theologians want to translate Christ out of the Old Testament.

The next points deserve attention:

1. Practical implications for the use of lower case

Assuredly you will agree with the following four points:

At first: The use of lower case can estrange people from the Bible, Christianity and the church. People do not read the Bible in order to see how they can eliminate Christ from the Bible, but how they can learn to get to know Him better in the Scriptures. People do not go to church with the purpose to be taught from a Bible wherein Christ was translated out to a large extent. If the Bible Society and the Bible translators are of the opinion that the Afrikaans-speaking public want to have the Names of Christ translated out of the Old Testament, they are entirely mistaken.

25 Denominations participate in this translation. If the Bible translators reckon that some members of these churches prefer lower case, please mention the name(s) of these church(es). Furthermore, they must be aware that their allegations can be tested with those members in question.

Secondly: By using lower case, divisions are caused among Christians. Some churches and individuals are guided into accepting lower case, while others stand firmly on upper case.

Thirdly: In schools our young people are compelled to study various world religions side by side, from Grade 4 to 12. The use of lower case for the Names of Christ can weaken their view of Biblical doctrine and the honour of God.

Fourthly: The witness of Christians is hereby paralysed. This happens in circumstances where followers of other religions are growing in number. Please consider: One quarter of the world youth are raised as Muslims. From the age of three they have to memorise the Qur’an. Furthermore, in the South Africa’s central government there are probably more Muslims than Protestant Christians in the cabinet. This indicates to what extent Muslims have taken control of this country. By the use of lower case the message we have to convey to Muslims and followers of other religions is depleted. Afrikaans-speaking Christians are thus left in an embarrassing and powerless position.

2. The prominent photo of mr Trevor Manuel on the cover

The photo of mr Manuel appears on the cover in connection with a church and welfare conference where he participated. By placing his photo so prominently, the impression can be left with informed Christians and Muslims that *Kerkbode* (and thus the Christians in South Africa) has no problem with the rapid growth of Muslim control of this country. You should know that mr Manuel is a high-ranking Muslim. In fact, mr Manuel is one of a significant number of cabinet ministers and deputy ministers, as well as DG's and deputies of State departments, that are Muslims.

Keep in mind, according to the latest World Observation List of Open Doors, 37 of the top 50 countries where Christians are persecuted, are Muslim countries. South Africa is also moving in that direction.

Why do I mention that? Muslims do not believe that Jesus is God and the Son of God. Under strict *sharia law* anyone who believes that, can be beheaded. Throughout history this happened to thousands of Christians.

Muslims always refer to Mohammed as “the Prophet” (in upper case) and that they base on Deuteronomy 18:15.

What do the Bible translators do? They subvert the honour of Jesus by not writing His Names in the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament in upper case. In this way they empty the message of Scripture and this can only produce unfruitful work in conditions of witness and missions.

3. The article in *Kerkbode*, on page 4

3.1 In that article mention is made of a possible distinct edition of the new Bible “in order to accommodate six churches with objections who form part of the translation project, as well as certain individuals.” [Translated] The words “as well as certain individuals” can indicate that only some persons from the public want upper case letters. Over against that, I would like to bring reality to your attention, namely: only some individuals would prefer *lower case* letters. In my ministry I have been concentrating on the subject of Christ in the Old Testament for many years and spoke to many people about that. Throughout the reaction (from members of churches and most of the ministers) was one of amazement and dismay that the Bible translators could even consider using lower case.

The proper way is to publish only one edition of this Bible translation. It must be an upper case translation and this will excite the public and make them happy. The problems caused by two editions (one lower case and another upper case) will then be eliminated. There will then have to be no confusion and dispute between Christians about the new Bible.

3.2 The comment: “In the 1983 translation lower case letters were used and objections thereto were rejected by various Dutch Reformed synods.” [Translated]

The relevant synod resolutions, and my and prof Hoek's replies thereto can be found on the webpage www.2016vertaling.co.za. (Consult the document contained there: *Do we want an Old Testament without Christ?* point 8 and ANNEXURE 1.)

Note this: Such decisions taken by synods form part of lowest ebb of the existence of Christianity in this country.

- 3.3 Another comment was made that the Afrikaans Protestant Church (the APC) would also like to extend the use of upper case to other verses.

This is exactly what should be done. Now the Bible translators have the opportunity to do just that. In some respects the following Bible translations can serve as examples: the New American Standard Bible (NASB), Amplified Bible (Amp), New King James Version (NKJV), Green's Literal Translation (GLT), New Life Version (NLV), 21st Century KJV (21KJV), Holman Christian Standard Bible (CSB), and The Scriptures, a Bible translation by the Messianic Jews, ISBN 0-620-22490-8.

- 3.4 Furthermore it was mentioned that most of the English Bible translations make use of lower case in for example Isaiah 53:4 (which indicates that the pronouns *He*, *Him* and *His* referring to Christ, were written in lower case in this instance).

It does seem that the initial Bible translations published during and just after the Reformation, used lower case in the relevant pronouns. Upper case regarding pronouns came into use only later, especially in the twentieth century.

But note this: In those Bible translations published in and since the Reformation, the Names of Christ in the Old Testament were mostly written in upper case. (Compare the documents titled: *English and Latin Bibles analysed*, and its *ANNEXURE*. These documents are also available on the webpage www.2016vertaling.co.za).

All should agree that the use of upper case became a blessing for style, and that we can believe came about by the leading of the Holy Spirit. The use of upper case brings honour to God. Also: the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament can be differentiated much better by the use of upper case letters.

- 3.5 In their zeal to choose sides with lower case letters, *Kerkbode* committed errors in some matters. I was quoted several times with reference to a telephonic conversation Tobie Wiese, the *Kerkbode* correspondent, had with me before 20 April. Thus *Kerkbode* alleges for example that I would have said: "(I) will not buy an upper case Bible because then my money would subsidise the lower case editions." [Translated] If the editorial staff of *Kerkbode* would have a good look at these words, they would realise it is a senseless version of my point of view. Fact is, I will buy a lower case edition to see the mischief to which the translators were up, and I will buy an upper case edition to see to what extent upper case letters were used.

Kerkbode alleges further that I would have said that the Latin text of the Catholic Church "is being used by the majority of Bible translators." [Translated] Those were not my words, but a remark by Tobie Wiese during the conversation. According to the article in *Kerkbode*, it could be interpreted that I am not convinced the Bible translators use Hebrew and Greek texts for translation. I did mention to Tobie that the influence of the Catholic Church with its Latin texts was resulting in the use of lower case letters.

Kerkbode alleges furthermore that I would have said Mario Maria Martini was the present leader of the movement which hoped to assert the influence of the Catholic Church on Bible translations. The fact is that he was the leader of that movement during and after the *Vatican II* Council which lasted from 1962 to 1965. Most likely he died long ago.

4. Article in *Kerkbode* on pages 12 and 13

The conversation with prof Combrink seems favourable, if regarded superficially. However, once one has walked far and long concerning this matter, one is aware of the signs of danger. In the central column on page 13 this paragraph occurs: “The BSSA (Bible Society of South Africa) wants to reach its aims without providing doctrinal interpretations to the Bible. It provides the Bible text and the church has the duty to guide church members to understand the contents in the light of their confessions of faith.” [Translated]

This viewpoint of the translators highlights the core of the problem. This point of view means that the translation does for example not have to reflect that a Divine Person (thus God Himself) would die for our sins – and that lower case letters can therefore be used in for example Isaiah 53. This can lead to deception. The result is any messiah can be regarded as the redeemer of sins and that an ordinary man could just as well die for our sins.

In addition the following argument is set against the view of the Bible translators, namely: If no doctrinal interpretation is allowed in the translation of the Old Testament, logically it would apply similarly to the New Testament. In that case the Names of Christ should disappear from the New Testament as well!

The article in *Kerkbode* said: “The BSSA... provides the Bible text and the church has the duty to guide church members to understand the contents in the light of the confessions of faith.” [Translated] Fact is though: The Bible is mainly read in situations where the church is not present to guide them. Even though the church would be present, the readers would still have the right to say: That which the Bible translation (with the lower case letters) says, contradicts the Gospel.

Note: Fact is, the Bible translators want to use lower case for a number of unbiblical reasons. Their arguments are discussed in the book: *Do we want an Old Testament without Christ?* (read chapter 7), as well as in the document, titled: *Point of view of the Bible Society and Bible translators*. Both can be read on the webpage www.2016vertaling.co.za.

5. Leading article of *Kerkbode*, on page 10

In this leader *Kerkbode* supports the Bible translators, saying: “This means the translators regard the text as more important than the dogmatic reflection.” [Translated] Please take careful note: “Dogmatic reflection” means conveying the doctrine and message of the Bible. Do the translators want to subordinate, or remove the doctrine and message for the sake of the original languages? Fact is, the Bible was written in the original languages in order to present us with a message. This message is the one (namely the Gospel) which should take first place in the translation.

The leading article has more sentences which require attention: “It is a pity that some individuals leave no room for any other translation theory and interpretation than their own,” and: “(in this way) they throw suspicion on (the translation process).” [Translated] This refers quite clearly to me. I would kindly like to point to *Kerkbode* that my point of view is that Scripture declares itself, thus that the Old Testament should be declared in the light of the New Testament. Both Testaments (if translated correctly) have Divine authority. This translation option is therefore the only one to be used.

The last paragraph reads as follows: “The Bible Society has proved time and again that they can be trusted with the Bible and its contents. *Kerkbode* asks readers to do this once more.” [Translated] In response thereto one has to say: The contrary is true. The

1983 translation already showed that the Bible Society and the Bible translators translated the Lord Jesus out of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. What does this indicate? That they can be trusted with their task?

6. What about the spiritual leaders?

Where is the problem? Not with the church members, as in genuine reverence they seek their God whose Names are in upper case. The problem is with a great number of theologians. If the majority of new Bible translations are lower case translations, it would indicate that the persons who ought to be spiritual leaders have gone astray. In history many such examples prevailed. Consider the following:

At first: At the time of the Old Testament the priests (and sometimes the whole class of priests) at times went astray to such an extent that the prophets had to call them back to true religion. (Read Ezekiel 34:1-31; Malachi 2:1-9.)

Secondly: When Christ was on earth, His greatest adversaries were the Pharisees and the scribes (the theologians of that time).

Thirdly: Since then (during the past 2000 years) the institutional church completely lost its way at times. Take for example the Roman church during the time from about AD 500 to AD 1517. That tendency was mainly reversed by the Reformation. Fact remains: The false doctrine of the Roman church came about because of the faulty guidance of the spiritual leaders.

What does that teach us? If the church could sometimes lose its way in the course of thousands of years, we should be mindful that it can happen again. Clearly the movement at present permeating Christianity in many places in the Western World, namely to write the Names of Christ in the Messianic prophecies in lower case, can be attributed to spiritual coldness among many theologians. The reverence and respect for God are disappearing. Under such circumstances deception can easily flourish. Deception is a sign of the end times.

A practical example is that some theologians affirm they acknowledge the Divinity of Christ, but they resolutely write His Names (and the relevant pronouns) in lower case. We have to honestly say to those persons: By using lower case you indicate that in reality you do not acknowledge the Divinity of Christ.

Everyone should take the next statement to heart: If you do not want Christ in the Bible, you are outside the Kingdom.

Note: Please do not take exception to what is written here. This is written to help and not to judge.

7. Summary

7.1 In the two articles and the leading article of the 20 April edition of *Kerkbode*, no mention is made anywhere of the leading of the Holy Spirit in the exegesis and translation of the Scriptures. Is the wonderful leading of the Holy Spirit now being replaced by so-called human cleverness? Is that the origin of the use of lower case?

7.2 It is evident that *Kerkbode*, as well as the Bible Society and the Bible translators, side with the lower case movement.

- 7.3 However, let us keep battling persistently to maintain the honour of Christ, for His Names and the pronouns referring to Him to be assuredly written in upper case in the Old Testament in the new Afrikaans Bible translation.
- 7.4 Only one edition must be published, an upper case edition.
- 7.5 In this upper case edition more letters in upper case than in the 1953 edition must be used to indicate the Names of Christ in the Old Testament.
- 7.6 In the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, both upper case letters and foot-notes can be used.
- 7.7 At present 25 Afrikaans churches are participating in this translation project, six of which have indicated they prefer the upper case edition. Our task is to pray and work towards getting all 25 churches to use the upper case edition.

Thank you for your attention. May the Lord draw you closer to Him by your reading and applying of this.

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✘ **This document titled: “*Kerkbode* articles about the new Bible translation, in the 20 April 2012 edition,” is one of the documents occurring in Afrikaans and English on the webpage www.2016vertaling.co.za .**

✘ **My books can be found on the website www.thetrue revelation.co.za (don't Google).**

All the documents that appear on this website were submitted in advance to the Bible Society, the leaders of the Afrikaans Bible Translation Project, and the editorial staff of *Kerkbode*.