

Micah 4:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

Analysis

For all people will walk every one in the name of his god (כִּי כָל־הָעַמִּים יֵלְכוּ אִישׁ בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהָיו, ki khol-ha'ammim yelkhu ish be-shem elohav). This verse presents interpretive challenge. Does it describe continued polytheism during the messianic age, or acknowledge present reality before transition? הָלַךְ בְּשֵׁם (halakh be-shem, walk in the name of) means living according to a deity's character and authority. The observation that עַמִּים (ammim, peoples/nations) serve their respective אֱלֹהִים (elohim, gods) states contemporary reality—nations follow various deities.

And we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever (וְאֶנְחֵנוּ נֵלֶכְךָ בְּשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, va-anachnu nelekh be-shem-YHWH Eloheinu le-olam va-ed). Israel's contrasting commitment is emphatic: **"we"** (אֶנְחֵנוּ, anachnu) will walk in יְהוָה (YHWH, Yahweh's) name לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד (le-olam va-ed, forever and ever)—eternal, unwavering loyalty. This may be Israel's confession of exclusive devotion despite surrounding polytheism, or acknowledgment that even in the messianic age, faith remains voluntary—not coerced uniformity but chosen allegiance.

The tension between universal peace (v. 1-4) and continued diversity suggests progressive fulfillment. The messianic kingdom advances through persuasion, not force (Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 12:18-21). Christ's kingship doesn't obliterate free will but wins voluntary submission through love (John 12:32; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15). The New Testament envisions ultimate universal acknowledgment: **"At the name of Jesus every knee should bow... and every tongue should**

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:10-11). Yet this doesn't eliminate genuine choice but represents truth's final vindication when all creation recognizes Christ's rightful rule.

Historical Context

Ancient polytheism assumed each nation had patron deities—Chemosh for Moab, Marduk for Babylon, Yahweh for Israel. This verse may acknowledge that reality while affirming Israel's exclusive commitment to Yahweh. Deuteronomy 32:8-9 presents God allocating nations to angelic beings while reserving Israel as His own portion. Yet Yahweh's ultimate purpose wasn't mere tribal deity status but revelation as the only true God, Creator of all (Isaiah 45:5-6, 22).

The New Testament expands this vision—the gospel goes to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20), creating one new humanity in Christ (Ephesians 2:14-16). The church comprises people from **"every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue"** (Revelation 7:9) united in worship of the Lamb. This doesn't erase cultural diversity but sanctifies it—redeemed cultures bringing their glory into the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:24-26). The question isn't uniformity but unified allegiance to the one true King while maintaining redeemed cultural expressions.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Israel's commitment to walk in Yahweh's name 'forever and ever' demonstrate the nature of covenant faithfulness amid surrounding polytheism?

2. What does this verse teach about Christ's kingdom advancing through voluntary submission rather than coercive uniformity?
3. In what ways should Christian mission respect cultural diversity while proclaiming exclusive allegiance to Christ as the only Lord?

Interlinear Text

כָּל	יְהוָה	יְלֹכֶוּ	אֵשׁ	בְּשֵׁם	אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	וְאֵלֵינוּ
H3588	H3605	H1980	H376	H8034	H430	H587
	For all people	every one	in the name	of his god		
	H5971					
וְעַד	לְעוֹלָם	אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה	בְּשֵׁם	יְהוָה	יְלֹכֶוּ	כָּל
H1980	H5769	H430	H8034	H3068	H1980	H3588
and ever	for ever	of his god	in the name	of the LORD	every one	For all people
H5703						

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 10:12 (References Lord): And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 26:8 (References Lord): Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

Colossians 3:17 (References God): And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Joshua 24:15 (References God): And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

2 Kings 17:29 (References God): Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

Isaiah 2:5 (References Lord): O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Psalms 48:14 (References God): For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

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