

# Isaiah 2:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.

## Analysis

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The dual action—'boweth down' and 'humbleth himself'—describes self-abasement before idols, inverting proper worship where humans stand upright before God through Christ's mediation. The plea 'forgive them not' (absent in some manuscripts) seems harsh but reflects covenantal judgment: persistent impenitence forfeits mercy. This anticipates Jesus' teaching that blasphemy against the Spirit—persistent rejection of conviction—remains unforgivable (Matthew 12:31-32). God's forgiveness, while freely offered, requires repentant reception; those who refuse to bow to God will remain bowing to idols.

## Historical Context

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Isaiah's era witnessed both royal apostasy (Ahaz) and reform (Hezekiah), demonstrating mixed response to prophetic call. Those persisting in idolatry despite warning faced covenant curses.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How do we distinguish between appropriate humility and self-abasement before false gods?
2. What does the severity of this judgment teach about the seriousness with which God views idolatry?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיִּשָּׁב	וְהָאִישׁ	וַיִּשְׁפָּל	וְהָאִישׁ	וְהָאִישׁ
boweth down	And the mean man	humbleth	and the great man	
H7817	H120	H8213	H376	H408
וְהָאִישׁ	וְהָאִישׁ			
himself therefore forgive				
H5375	H0			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 5:15** (Parallel theme): And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

**Isaiah 27:11** (Parallel theme): When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.

**Nehemiah 4:5** (Parallel theme): And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.

**Mark 3:29** (Parallel theme): But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

**Romans 3:23** (Parallel theme): For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

**Joshua 24:19** (Parallel theme): And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

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