

# Jeremiah 42:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it.

## Analysis

**For ye dissembled in your hearts** (כִּי הִתְعַתָּם בְּנִפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם)—the Hebrew hit'etem means 'you deceived yourselves,' from the root ta'ah (תָּعַתָּה), to wander or err. Not merely lying to Jeremiah but self-deception—they believed their own false piety. **When ye sent me unto the LORD your God**—note the distance: 'your God,' not 'our God,' subtly distancing themselves from covenant accountability while using religious language.

**Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it**—quoting their earlier vow (v. 5-6) highlights the duplicity. They swore absolute obedience, even calling down covenant curses: 'The LORD be a true and faithful witness' (v. 5). Yet they had already decided to flee to Egypt (43:2-3), making their inquiry theatrical—seeking prophetic endorsement, not divine guidance. Their sin wasn't disobeying after honest inquiry but dishonest inquiry masking predetermined rebellion.

## Historical Context

This confrontation occurred after Jerusalem's fall (586 BC) and Gedaliah's assassination (41:1-3), when the remnant feared Babylonian retaliation. They approached Jeremiah seeking God's will (42:1-3), waited ten days for His answer

(42:7), but rejected it when it contradicted their plan to flee to Egypt. This represents covenant community's final rebellion before Jeremiah's forced exile to Egypt.

## Related Passages

---

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

---

1. When have you sought God's will while already knowing what you wanted, making prayer a formality rather than genuine submission?
2. What's the difference between changing your mind after honest prayer and self-deception that pretends to seek God's guidance?
3. How does using religious language ('pray for us,' 'we will obey') mask rather than express genuine faith commitment?

## Interlinear Text

---

אַתָּה יְשַׁלַּחַת מִן אֶת מִן בְּנֵפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בְּנֵפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי  
H3588      For ye dissembled      H8582      H3588      H859      H853  
הַתִּעְתַּרְתִּים כִּי בְּנֵפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בְּנֵפְשׁוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי  
H3582      in your hearts      H5315      H3588      H859      H853

הַתִּפְלֶל לְיִאמְרָה אֱלֹהִינוּ  
H413      and according unto all that the LORD      H3068      H430      H559      H6419  
אֱלֹהִינוּ יְהִי הָרָא  
H1157      H413      H3068      H430      H3605      H834

אֲשֶׁר יְכַל אֱלֹהִינוּ  
H559      H413      H3068      H430      H3651      H5046  
יְאֹמֵר אֱלֹהִינוּ יְהִי הָרָא  
saying      and according unto all that the LORD      our God      H3651      so declare      H0

לְנוּ פְּגַד כִּי אֱלֹהִינוּ יְהִי הָרָא  
H6213      unto us and we will do  
לְעַשְׂינוּ:

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)