

Psalms 78:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.

Analysis

And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust—the Hebrew *nissâ* (tempted) means to test or prove, putting God on trial to see if He'll comply with fleshly demands. Numbers 11:4-34 records this incident: the 'mixed multitude' craved Egyptian cuisine, spurning manna as inadequate. Their *ta'ăwâ* (lust, craving) represented not hunger but discontent with God's chosen provision.

James 1:14 explains: 'Each person is tempted when dragged away and enticed by his own lust.' Israel's sin was demanding God satisfy appetites rather than trusting His menu. Jesus refused to turn stones to bread (Matthew 4:3-4) because 'man shall not live by bread alone'—the very lesson Israel failed in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:3).

Historical Context

The quail incident (Numbers 11) occurred at Kibroth-hattaavah ('graves of craving') in the wilderness of Paran, approximately one year after leaving Egypt. God granted their demand but sent 'leanness into their soul' (Psalm 106:15).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What cravings are you demanding God satisfy instead of receiving His chosen provision?
2. How does consumer culture's 'you deserve it' mentality mirror Israel's wilderness lust?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּטְּסוּ	לֵאלֹהִים	בְּלִבָּבָם	לִשְׁאֹל	אֶכָּל	לִנְפֻשָׁם:
And they tempted	God	in their heart	by asking	meat	for their lust
H5254	H410	H3824	H7592	H400	H5315

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 6:16 (References God): Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.

Numbers 11:4 (Parallel theme): And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?

1 Corinthians 10:9 (Parallel theme): Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.