

# Exodus 32:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.

## Analysis

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Moses' threefold correction uses different Hebrew terms: not קול ענות גְבוּרָה (qol anot gevurah, sound of triumph) nor קול ענות חִלּוּשָׁה (qol anot chalushah, sound of defeat), but קול ענות (qol annot, sound of singing/responding). The word ענות (annot) suggests responsive singing, likely the antiphonal worship of pagan festivals. Moses recognized immediately what Joshua missed—this was worship, but directed toward the wrong object. The parallel sounds (ענות, anot) emphasize Moses' certainty that this was religious activity, not warfare.

## Historical Context

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Moses' immediate discernment came from his awareness of Egyptian religion (having lived in Pharaoh's court) and God's recent revelation. He recognized pagan worship patterns despite Joshua's military interpretation.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How can religious activity mask spiritual adultery?
2. What enables discernment between godly and fleshly worship?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵין	קֹל	עֲנֵה	הַגְּבוּרָה	אֵין
And he said	H369	It is not the voice	of them that cry	for mastery	H369
H559		H6963	H6030	H1369	
קֹל	עֲנֵה	חֲלוּשָׁה	קֹל		
It is not the voice	of them that cry	for being overcome	It is not the voice		
H6963	H6030	H2476	H6963		
עֲנֵה	אֲנֹכִי	שָׁמַעַי			
of them that sing	H595	do I hear			
H6031		H8085			