

# Acts 7:53

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

## Analysis

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The irony peaks: they 'received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.' Those accusing Stephen of law-breaking were themselves law-breakers. Privilege of receiving the law increased guilt for disobedience. Angels mediating Sinai's revelation emphasized its sacredness.

## Historical Context

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Jewish tradition held that angels mediated the law's giving at Sinai (Galatians 3:19, Hebrews 2:2). Stephen turns their accusation back on themselves - they violated what they claimed to defend.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does religious privilege increase accountability for obedience?
2. What does accusing law-keepers of law-breaking accomplish in Stephen's argument?

## Interlinear Text

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οἵτινες    ἐλάβετε    τὸν    νόμον    εἰς    διαταγὰς    ἀγγέλων    καὶ  
**Who**    **have received**    G3588    **the law**    **by**    **the disposition**    **of angels**    **and**  
G3748    G2983       G3551    G1519    G1296    G32    G2532

οὐκ    ἐφυλάξατε  
**not**    **have**  
G3756    G5442

## Additional Cross-References

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**Hebrews 2:2** (Word): For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

**Galatians 3:19** (Word): Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

**Acts 7:38** (Parallel theme): This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

**Deuteronomy 33:2** (Word): And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

**John 7:19** (Word): Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

**Galatians 6:13** (Word): For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.