> “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat.”
>
> — Matthew 23:2 (ESV)

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## Introduction: Understanding the Seat of Moses

The “Seat of Moses” is a metaphorical phrase referring to the position of authority in teaching and interpreting the Law of God given through Moses. Jesus uses this phrase to describe how the scribes and Pharisees assumed this role in Jewish society during His time.

In a similar way to saying someone “sits in the president’s seat,” it means they carry the authority and responsibility of that position.

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## 1. Moses’ God-Given Roles in Israel

### A. Moses as the Teacher of the Law

Moses was appointed by God to teach His statutes,

commandments, and judgments to the people of Israel.

> *Deuteronomy 4:1 (ESV):*
> “And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live…”

> *Deuteronomy 4:14 (NKJV):*
> “And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.”

Moses was not just a lawgiver—he was the spiritual educator, ensuring that Israel knew how to live according to God’s will.

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B. Moses as the Leader and Judge

Moses also acted as Israel’s civil and spiritual leader, rendering judgments and leading them in their journey.

> *Exodus 18:13 (NKJV):*
> “And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening.”

> *Exodus 11:3 (NKJV):*
> “Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh’s servants and in the sight of the people.”

Moses’ leadership was not just administrative—it was prophetic and deeply spiritual, serving as a mediator between God and His people (*cf. Numbers 12:6–8*).

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2. The Pharisees and Scribes Sit in Moses’ Seat

In Matthew 23, Jesus acknowledges the Pharisees and scribes as occupying Moses’ role of teaching the law. However, He criticizes their hypocrisy and legalism.

> *Matthew 23:2–3 (ESV):*
> “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.”

Their role was legitimate—but their character was not. Unlike Moses, who was humble and obedient (see Numbers 12:3), the Pharisees were known for outward religiosity but inward pride.

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3. Jesus Condemns Hypocritical Leadership

Jesus strongly rebukes the religious leaders of His day for burdening the people with the law while not practicing it themselves.

> *Matthew 23:4–7 (ESV):*
> “They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger… They love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues.”

Their leadership was driven by pride, not servanthood. Everything they did was for public praise, not God’s glory.

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## 4. A New Way: Servant Leadership in Christ

Jesus introduces a new standard of leadership for His followers—humility and service, not position or title.

> *Matthew 23:11–12 (ESV):*
> “The greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”

> *Philippians 2:5–8 (ESV):*
> “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus... who humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Jesus, the greater Moses (*cf. Hebrews 3:1–6*), not only fulfilled the

Law but modeled perfect servant leadership.

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## 5. Christ: The True Fulfillment of the Law

Jesus didn’t come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it.

> *Matthew 5:17 (NKJV):*
> “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

He exposes the heart of the Law, which the Pharisees had obscured with man-made traditions and external practices (cf. Mark 7:6–9).

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## 6. A Personal Challenge: Where Do You Sit?

Many today may claim to “sit in Moses’ seat”—as pastors, teachers, or spiritual leaders—but Jesus’ warning still applies: authentic leadership must be matched with authentic living.

> *James 1:22 (ESV):*
> “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

God desires leaders who are like Moses: humble, faithful, and obedient, not those seeking status or recognition.

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7. Call to Salvation

Are you living under the Law or under the grace of Christ?

Jesus invites every person—not just the religious elite—to enter the Kingdom by grace through faith.

> *2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV):*
> “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

> *John 3:3 (ESV):*
> “Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

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Conclusion: Who Sits on the Throne of Your Life?

The Pharisees sat in Moses’ seat but missed the heart of God. You may know Scripture, attend church, or even lead others—but do you truly know Christ?

Let Christ be the true Teacher, Judge, and Lord of your life. Let His humility guide your walk and His truth set you free.

> *John 8:31–32 (NKJV):*
> “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

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May the Lord bless you as you pursue truth, humility, and grace through Jesus Christ—the perfect fulfillment of Moses’ role and the perfect Servant King.

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