

## JESUS PREDICTS HIS RETURN

*Mark 13; Isaiah 51:6; Jeremiah 31:35–37*

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The first time I heard about the tribulation and rapture, my young mind went wild. From then on, whenever I couldn't find my parents in a grocery store, it hit just a little differently. When I woke up and the house was quiet, I would wonder, *Is this the end of the world? Did the rapture happen? Have I been left behind?*

As I got older, I spent more time studying Scripture, looking for clues on when the earth as we know it would come to an end. What I found was this: no one has concrete answers on the day and time it will all go down—“neither the angels of heaven nor the Son—[no one] except the Father” (Matthew 24:36). And that's more than okay. Still, there's something

in our human nature that leaves us longing to know everything. We want answers, and we want them *now*. But God doesn't ask us to know everything. He asks us to trust Him.

In Mark 13, Jesus's disciples asked Him about the end of the age. They knew everything was going to change, but they wanted specifics. They wanted to know the details, what signs to look for so they could prepare themselves (v.4).

Jesus talks about the end of the age and warns them that in the days ahead, there will be false prophets, wars, famine, and turmoil (Mark 13:5–6). The disciples would go on to face persecution like never before, but their calling would remain the same: to preach the gospel to all nations (v.10). And instead of the end of time, these signs would represent the start of something new. When Jesus left, the Holy Spirit would come in His place, and His followers would never be alone or without Him again (v.11).

I imagine that was a lot for the disciples to hear, let alone understand—that even when everything seems like a mystery and feels confusing, in reality, God remains on His throne. He remains in control. And when He comes again, we will see that He still holds all glory and power (vv.26–27). Knowing this, Jesus makes a promise to His disciples:

*“Heaven and earth will pass away,  
but my words will never pass away” (Mark 13:31).*

Only God knows what is to come. Some things are just not for us to know. As followers of Jesus, our job is to trust, watch, and stay alert. In the meantime, how we live and wait for Him matters (vv.32–37). One day, the earth will wear out like a garment; nothing in it will last (Isaiah 51:6). Nice cars, expensive shoes, dream jobs, money, and power—it's all passing away. But God's salvation and righteousness will last forever. That is what we cling to. That is the only thing we need to know.

 ABBY FLYNN