Question:

Why does the Bible say that only the Father knows the day and hour of Jesus' return, and not the Son? Especially since Jesus is God?

Answer:

Let's carefully examine Matthew 24:36

> "But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

The Doctrine of the Incarnation and Kenosis

Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man (John 1:14). In becoming human (the Incarnation), He voluntarily limited some of His divine attributes in what theologians call the *kenosis*—a self-emptying described in Philippians 2:6-8:

> “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”

This means that during His earthly life, Jesus voluntarily refrained from exercising some divine prerogatives, including omniscience, to fully experience humanity.

Jesus’ Human Experience and Learning

Hebrews 5:7 highlights Jesus’ humanity and dependence on the Father:

> “During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverent submission.”

Jesus experienced growth and learning just like any other human (Luke 2:46):

> “After three days they found Him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions.”

Thus, it is understandable that Jesus did not know the exact time of His return while living in human flesh.

Jesus’ Divine Authority After Resurrection

After His resurrection, Jesus was exalted and given all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:16-18):

> “Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.'”

This means Jesus now fully exercises divine knowledge, including the knowledge of His return.

Additional Scriptural Evidence

- John 21:22: Jesus said to Peter about John, *“If I want him to remain alive until I come, what is that to you?”* This indicates Jesus knew the timing of His coming.
- Revelation 3:3; 16:15; 22:12, 20 further affirm Jesus’ authority over His return and the final judgment.

The temporary limitation of Jesus’ divine knowledge during His earthly ministry aligns with the theological doctrine of *kenosis*—He humbled Himself to fully experience human life. However, after His resurrection and exaltation, Jesus possesses full divine authority and knowledge, including the exact time of His second coming.

May God bless you.

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