

According to Working Preacher, Mark 9:9-13 in the Gospel of Mark refers to Jesus assuring his disciples that everything is happening according to God's plan. This includes Jesus's instruction to keep what they have seen a secret until after the resurrection. Jesus also reminds his disciples that he will suffer, die, and rise again.

C. Clifton Black:

“Listen to him!” (Mark 9:7). For the first and only time in Mark, the voice from heaven orders Jesus’ disciples. This command recollects Moses’ directive: Israel should heed a prophet whom the LORD God would raise up (Deuteronomy 18:15). In Jesus, God has done this; Israel’s successors should respond appropriately. To what should Jesus’ disciples pay attention? Presumably, everything in Mark that Jesus says and does. Immediately it refers to God’s design for the Son of Man’s suffering and vindication (Mark 8:31), the adoption of cross-bearing discipleship (8:34-35), keeping mum about what has been seen until after the resurrection (9:9), and assurance that all proceeds according to the divine plan (9:11-13). These are the very things that his disciples find so hard to understand, to accept, and to obey (9:31-34; 10:32-37; 14:26-31, 50, 66-72; 16:1-8). As suddenly as it struck, the mountaintop vision fades: a handful of disciples are alone with Jesus (9:8).

1. *Are we listening?* Igor Stravinsky said, “To listen is an effort, and just to hear is no merit. A duck hears also.” If this is true of music, how much more does it bear on Jesus’ commands? It is one thing to admire the Messiah; to obey him is something else. “Follow me” (Mark 1:17; 2:14). “Pay attention to what you hear” (4:24). “Do not be afraid, only believe” (5:36; 6:50). “You give them something to eat” (6:37). “It is what comes out of a person that defiles” (7:20). “Deny [yourself] and take up [your cross] and follow me” (8:34). “But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first” (10:31). “Whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all” (10:44). “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone” (11:25). That’s only from Mark; Matthew, Luke, and John offer more. Anyone who thinks Christian faith is a retreat from reality is clueless.

Mark 9:9-13:

Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of Man who will be given authority over the world, will face betrayal and death. Elijah, glorified here, once ran for his life from Queen Jezebel, the evil wife of the weak King Ahab (1 Kings 19:1–2). John the Baptist, the symbol of Elijah's return (Matthew 17:13), whom Jesus declared the greatest man ever born (Matthew 11:11), was assassinated through manipulation by Herodias, the evil wife of the weak King Herod (Mark 6:14–29). Even though Elijah escaped death and was taken to heaven while still living (2 Kings 2:11), he still lived a perilous life. The short-sighted disciples follow Jesus in part to gain glory and honor for themselves (Mark 9:33–34; 10:35–37). They don't seem to hear Jesus' warnings to prepare for a cross before they go looking for a crown (Mark 8:34–38).

<https://www.bibleref.com/Mark/9/Mark-9-13>