

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
15 Park Row, Rooms 411, 412
New York 7, N. Y.

BIBLE MESSAGES
Broadcast over A.B.C.
11.15 a.m. E.S.T.
March 16, 1946

BIBLE MESSAGE

JESUS CHRIST, THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR

By the Rev. Allan A. MacRae, D.D.

John 1:29 "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Two weeks ago we saw that in building our lives it is extremely vital that we take into consideration an extremely important factor -- the personal activity and presence of the Almighty God. Last week we observed that God has revealed Himself most clearly to the world through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We saw that Christians believe that this Man who was born of a Jewish mother in Palestine 1900 years ago, who walked and talked on the streets of Jerusalem and in Galilee, and who was crucified at Calvary, was actually God incarnate. Today we ask the question, what was the most important fact about the earthly life of the Lord? What was the outstanding purpose for which He came to earth anyway? To this question the verse with which we began our meditation this morning offers a vital clue: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

In the latter half of Matthew 16 a most remarkable incident is described. One day Jesus asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" They answered that some thought Him to be John the Baptist, while some said He was Elijah. Others said He was Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. Then He asked them, "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

This answer of Peter's pleased Jesus very much. He praised him for having given it. He said that this great declaration of the fact of His deity would become the very foundation of His church, and that the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

Further on, in verse 21, we read: "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Quite naturally Peter was horrified. He could not imagine that his Master, the great Lord of the universe, could actually suffer a humiliating death. As any one of us would probably have done, he turned to Jesus in consternation, and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." Here we find a strange occurrence. Jesus, who has just praised Peter for his insight, now rebukes him in very strong language, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." So important did Jesus consider the fact of His approaching humiliating death to be, that He did not hesitate to call His leading follower "Satan," for contradicting Him on this point.

This leads us to a fact that is hard for most of us to realize. The most important fact about the earthly life of Jesus, was not His teachings, nor His character, but His suffering and death!

His teachings were superior to those of all others. In them we find a