

(25) I have raised up one from the north, and he has come; from the rising of the sun he will call on my name; and he will come upon rulers as upon mortar, and as the potter treads clay. (26) Who has declared this from the beginning, that we may know? or from former times, that we may say, He is right? Indeed, there is no one who declared it; indeed there is no one who proclaimed it; indeed there is no one who has heard your words. (27) In the beginning I said to Zion, See, here they are, and to Jerusalem, I will provide a bearer of good news. (28) But when I look, there is no man; there is no counselor among them who, if I would ask, could bring me word. (29) Behold, all of them are false. Their deeds are worthless. Their molten images are wind and confusion.

In continuing the divine condemnation of idols, these verses assert that it is the LORD who has raised up the great conqueror whose tremendous successes are vividly described in verse 25. No heathen god has foretold the meteoric rise of this tremendous historical figure. God has predicted these great events far in advance, but not a single one of the idols or soothsayers of the heathen has been able to do so. All of them are a mere delusion. Their deeds are worthless. Their idols are merely wind and confusion.

One additional matter in chapter 41 needs to be noticed. It is a subject that is given so little emphasis in this chapter that it could easily be passed over without any realization of its importance; but in succeeding chapters it proves to be one of the most important themes in the whole section. It was introduced in verses 8-9, where the prophet turned his attention to Israel to reassure them that they need not fear the aggressor who would so terrify their heathen conquerors. This reassurance was introduced by saying, "But you, Israel, are my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen." Verse 9 also includes the words "you are my servant." This beginning of a theme not previously mentioned, that of the Servant of the LORD, must be looked at more closely before examining the first stage of its fuller development in 42:1-7.