

STUDIES IN ISAIAH

(Continued from the Oct. Issue)

Chapter Forty-One

In chapter forty some of the principal themes of the section which we are now beginning were stressed in a general way. We now begin the main body of the symphony.

The outstanding theme of chapter forty-one is the supremacy of God over all the false gods of the heathen. In the first verse He calls the people of all the lands to appear before Him and to answer the declaration of His supremacy. The chapter ends with a verdict against all the gods of the heathen: "Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion," (v. 29).

In verse two God asserts His supremacy by declaring His control over all the forces of history. He points to the righteous man from the east, the great King of Persia who has been conquering nations around Babylon during a number of years prior to the end of the exile, and is even beginning to appear as a menace to Babylon itself. He declares that He Himself is the One who raised up this mighty king and who gave him power over the nations. In the following chapters we shall frequently find allusions to this king who is to be used as God's agent in the deliverance of His people.

Verse four again declares that God is the One who has brought this great historical force into being.

In verses five and six we have a vivid picture of a nation filled with fear as they see the advance of the conquering armies of Cyrus. The words "the isles" which we find here and also in verse one are generally used in the Scriptures as a reference to the ^{Greeks} people of Greece, many of whom were