       the brands you have kindled. This you will have from my hand;
       you will lie down in torment.

In this passage, as in chapter 49, the Servant Himself speaks. His soliloquy in the first person plainly continues until the end of verse 9, and seems most reasonably also to include verses 10-11.

Since the word *servant* occurs in verse 10, it is natural to think that the Servant of the LORD is the speaker. This one usage by itself might not be conclusive, since there are a few instances in the book of Isaiah where the prophet speaks of himself as God's servant; but the long series of references to the Servant in our present section and the previous appearance of the two extended passages in chapters 42 and 49 point strongly in the direction of the Servant being the speaker here. Besides, the passage hardly seems to describe Isaiah. Nowhere else in his book is there even a hint that he endured a period of suffering. Still more important, verse 11 attributes to the speaker a power far beyond anything that Isaiah would ever claim, for he says to all the faithless: "This you will have from my hand; you will lie down in torment."

It would be equally impossible for the nation of Israel to claim the power expressed in verse 11. Still greater objections to interpreting the speaker as Israel can be drawn from verses 5-6. It would not be reasonable to think of Israel as claiming to have voluntarily submitted itself to humiliation and suffering (v. 6), since it has been declared many times in our section that God caused Israel to suffer on account of its sin. Nor could we expect the prophet to attribute to Israel the words, "I was not rebellious" (v. 5), in view of the many previous statements about Israel's refusal to follow the LORD.

The passage begins with a statement, in verse 4, of the speaker's close relationship to God. Its first words parallel 49:2 in their emphasis on the ability of the Servant to speak. Christians should never cease to thank God for His priestly work in giving Himself as a sacrifice and thus making it possible that they should be saved. Yet they make a great mistake if they neglect