

what He chooses. You needn't say the work is impossible. God has said this work is to be done. He has set apart Israel for the work, and the work will be done. And if Israel falls into sin, and cannot do it, then it will be done through one who will represent Israel. The Lord will accomplish His work. Now, who says, the Lord God? Who is talking in v.3? "I clothed the heavens with blackness." Who is that? Is that God, or Isaiah? It is certainly ~~the~~ God speaking in v.3. Now, is the same person speaking in v.4? Or is it someone else? The Lord God has given me ~~the~~ the tongue of the learned, that I know how to speak the word in season to him that is weary. "Morning by morning he wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned." Is this Israel talking? Is this the messenger? Is the messenger ~~Isaiah~~ Isaiah? Or is it the servant? There are the various possibilities. And I don't know if we could be dogmatic on it just from v.4 alone, but certainly the servant is a suggestion worth considering. And now in v.5 he continues, and he ~~says~~ has just said, "He wakens my ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked out the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me...(vv.6-10..." Is this Israel, the servant of God speaking through this passage here? Or is it the servant, the one who represents Israel, but is not the whole of Israel speaking? At this point it is rather hard to make a decision. The picture given might perhaps be a picture of the suffering of Israel as Israel is in exile. If so, quite a figurative picture, of the situation in which Israel is. The misery through which it goes. And yet, the confidence that he has, the certainty that God will deliver him, the readiness to stand out and witness ~~and~~ for God, the statement, "I was not rebellious, neither turned away back," hardly seems to picture Israel. Is it a picture of Israel, or is it in some way a picture of the servant? If it is the picture of the servant, it is a new idea that we have not yet had in the book. That the servant is to go through suffering, and humiliation in some way similar to that which Israel has gone through. The only difference is, of course, that Israel has gone through it in the exile on account of its