

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCORE/GRADE:**

**PLOT: *The Bronze Bow***

In a single page, evaluate the thematic significance of this story's CLIMAX – that is, explain how the author uses this structural element to emphasize the story's main themes. As always, refer to the events of the story in your answer. For page-length answers, attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Daniel's conflict is resolved through the personal appearance of the character Jesus. In this, Daniel does get what he's after, but not in the manner he expected. For, in healing Leah and delivering Daniel from his hatred, Jesus delivers the kingdom which Daniel so ardently longed for, and simultaneously, freedom from all external rule and oppression. Freed from his sin, Daniel realizes that God's kingdom is "now," but invisible.

Daniel emphatically does not solve his own problems here. He is helpless to let go of his rage and oath for revenge. Even in the face of losing everything and everyone he loves, he is incapable of forsaking his own sinful wrath. "He sat beside Leah's mat, bewildered. One by one they had all left him, everyone who touched his life. Rosh. Samson. Joel. Thacia. Simon. Jesus. Now Leah was slipping away. With Leah's death he would be altogether free. But freedom seemed suddenly a terror of emptiness, and he had nothing to fill it but hatred...vengeance was all he had to give. It was better than nothing" (p.248). Even in the face of his sister's impending death, he cannot repent. This is evident in his words to Marcus. "If you could save my sister's life, I would not profane our house...I would rather let her die" (p. 251).

It is only the person of Jesus that evokes repentance. "If I could speak to him! Daniel thought with longing. If I could tell him it is my fault, that I have done this to Leah!" (p.252). In the character Jesus' eyes Daniel finds understanding, acceptance, and forgiveness, and with these healing and freedom. In the face of Jesus' smile Daniel is undone. "Unable to endure that smile, Daniel bent his head. Suddenly, with a longing that was more than he could bear, he wanted to stop fighting against this man. He knew that he would give everything he possessed in life to follow Jesus" (p.252).

From where does this powerful emotion come? Instead of giving Daniel what he deserves, the character of Jesus shows Daniel mercy and forgiveness. This demonstration of forgiveness leads Daniel to repentance. Daniel experiences the powerful, freeing force of love. “Was it possible that only love could bend the bow of bronze?” (p.252). The Scripture tells us that it is the kindness of God that leads us to repentance, and Speare paints a beautiful illustration of this truth in Daniel’s deliverance.

Does Daniel get what he wants? “To know Jesus would be enough...Almost with the thought the terrible weight was gone. In its place strength and sureness, and a peace he had never imagined, flowed around him and into his mind and heart” (p.253). What Daniel most wants is freedom, and it is in the forgiveness of the character Jesus that he finally finds it.