

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

SCORE/GRADE:

TEST: *The Bronze Bow*

On a separate sheet of paper, *identify* and *explain the significance* of FOUR of the following quotations from this story. To *identify* a quotation is to name the speaker (either a character or the narrator) and relate the quotation to the story's plot, setting, and conflict. *Explaining the significance* of the quotation means demonstrating how it represents or emphasizes the story's main themes.

1. *Just below them the village clung to the rocky slope; the dark block of the synagogue showed clearly among the clustering flat-roofed houses.*
2. *"After my father died, I made a vow ... I vowed I would pay them back with my whole life. That I would hate them and fight them and kill them. That's all I live for."*
3. *"...There's a flaw in you, boy, a soft streak. I've seen it over and over these years. Like a bad streak in a piece of metal. Either you hammer it out, the way you'd hammer out a bubble, or you'll be no good to us. When the day comes there'll be no place for weakness."*
4. *Leah, like Samson, had perished by the sword he had meant for Rome.*
5. *"That is not a vow of hate... Go in peace, my son. You are not far from the kingdom."*

Quote #1:

In this passage the narrator describes the village where Daniel lives, setting the scene for the story in the ancient Near East at the time of Jesus. The village clings to a rocky slope, recalling how the Jews of the story cling to a precarious existence as a subject people under the thumb of Rome. Additionally, the brooding presence of the synagogue, that symbol of Jewish religion and otherness, casts a shadow over the landscape that foretells conflict.

Quote #2:

Daniel bar-Jamin speaks these lines, revealing his driving motivation to avenge the death of his father at the hands of Roman soldiers. Hatred for his Roman oppressors consumes Daniel and directs his every action in the first half of the story, driving him away from his sister and his home into the arms of Rosh, leader of a nearby band of zealots. Whether and how Daniel will overcome the hatred revealed in this passage is the main question of the story, and Daniel's discovery of the power of God's love to do this very thing becomes the story's most important theme.

Quote #3:

The zealot Rosh functions as Daniel's mentor during the boy's flight from home and family. Rosh's brand of resistance to Roman rule appears to be exactly what Daniel seeks, at least early on. But Daniel and Rosh are different, and in this passage, Rosh judges Daniel too soft for successful zealotry. This evaluation foreshadows Daniel's conversion to Christianity later in the story, and also serves to emphasize the contrast between Rosh's worldview of victory through violence and Jesus's message of victory through forgiveness.

Quote #4:

Here the narrator describes the effects of Daniel's anger on his sister Leah, whose mental health has been badly damaged by the deaths of her parents. Fragile and retiring, Leah depends on Daniel for provision and protection. He has managed to draw her out into relationship with Thacia and Joel at one point in the story, but in his anger at her friendship with a Roman soldier, he lashes

out at her and drives her back into insanity. The narrator uses this episode to underscore the ways in which Daniel's bitterness is not a path toward victory, but a bondage that must be loosed if he is to survive.

Quote #5:

Jesus speaks with Daniel in the final stages of the story, sharing a way toward resolution – forgiveness and love – that Daniel has always spurned. Jesus's power attracts Daniel, but Daniel is slow to understand why Jesus doesn't use this power for vengeance. Jesus evaluates Daniel much like Rosh did earlier, and similarly notices the native softness of his heart. Where Rosh saw a weakness, however, Jesus sees an opportunity for salvation and encourages Daniel to keep pondering the possibility of love and forgiveness. In the end, Jesus's ministry to Leah will convince Daniel of the strength of God's love to bend any bow of bronze.