Meeting 1: Part One, chapters 1 to 9

Songs of Dust and Water, by M.J. Hydara. This meeting covers pages 3 to 78. Each question gives the pages it is about.

1. A new steel bracket on the plant snaps. Malik, the village smith, mends it in his forge, but Adam waits for a new one from the capital. What is each of them protecting? (pages 14 to 15)
2. Under the meeting tree, Samba asks whose land the plant will stand on, and Adam turns to Mustapha for a signature instead. What would it have cost Adam to answer Samba? (pages 16 to 18)
3. On the night the lights come on, Malik keeps to his forge and Ibrahim stays at home, though he moves his loom into the new light. What do you make of the characters who hold back that night? (pages 20 to 21)
4. Mustapha, the elder who signs for Madina, takes an envelope of money from a man sent by Minister Dunia. The book gives his reasons: a daughter's wedding, a son's debts, a roof that leaks. Does knowing them change how you judge him? (pages 34 to 35)
5. At dawn Talib shows Adam where the plant's money has gone, and Adam calls it noise. Why do you think he can't take it in? (pages 48 to 50)
6. Dunia, the Minister of Energy, tells Aisha about the eleven charity plaques she had counted in her district before she was twenty. Not one of the projects behind them still worked. What did those years teach Dunia, and does that change how you see what she did with the plant's money? (pages 58 to 60)
7. Six months after the fire, Talib sits at his own loom and ties the thread that broke in chapter 1, and his father begins to hum. What has changed for each of them since the morning it broke? (pages 73 to 74)
8. Adam stays away when Proxima's board meets to hear the report on the fire. He sends a single page about what he did, and asks for it to be read out in full, not summarised. Why might that matter to him? (pages 75 to 76)