



*Jonas walked outside. It was already late in the afternoon. He had to hurry because it was getting dark. Suddenly they were standing there, the Roman soldiers. Immediately Jonas had a bad feeling. Every time he saw the city rulers he became depressed, anxious. He could feel sweat pouring all over his body. He walked on quickly and thought of his uncle Janes. Last week the Romans had seized him and questioned him. They thought he was a rebel. Uncle Janes was released three days later. When Jonas had visited him he sat there like a scared little bird. The skin around his eye was black and blue. His fingers didn't look too good either. Later he showed the marks on his back. No, it wasn't fun living in this time in Jerusalem. You felt like a prisoner in your own nation. Jonas' father had talked about the time of King Solomon's reign. That was true peace. Everything was plentiful. The temple was an especially amazing place where the presence of God came. Jonas was happy at the thought of there being peace again. And he was actually expecting peace to return quickly. In Isaiah, a wonderful book which was frequently read out in the Jewish synagogue, it said that a time of peace shall come, and that the Messiah, an anointed King, shall come to bring that peace. Yes Jonas believed it.*

*After fifteen minutes Jonas finally arrived at Aram's house. Aram had met an amazing man who was coming to his house. This man, according to others, had healed a blind man. Jonas needed an encouraging word because he wasn't feeling well at all. Jonas had been unhappy for years. He had everything a person could want; a beautiful loving wife, a good job and enough money. And yet he wasn't happy. He was looking for something and yet he didn't know what. He often went to the temple, but the presence of God wasn't there like father had talked of so many times. There were beautiful rituals but for what were we doing them?*

*Aram's house was completely filled with people. The guest was already speaking. Unbelievable, he was talking about the Kingdom Jonas had been thinking about. He said that the Kingdom had already come and was within reach. He also said something about a mustard seed. Suddenly it became unruly and a woman started acting strangely, shouting loudly 'Jesus you are the Son of God.' The speaker looked with such love in His eyes at the woman and spoke to an evil spirit. The woman fell to the ground and a little while later woke up. Jonas could hardly believe it was the same woman who had been shouting earlier. Her eyes looked different and she was speaking more calmly. Jonas decided to believe the words of Jesus. He didn't understand much of what was said but one thing was certain. This man brought peace.*

*At the end of the evening a happy Jonas walked to his uncle Janes' home. He told him everything he had heard. Uncle Janes looked increasingly confused. His face made it clear that he thought this was a strange story. Just before Jonas was about to finish telling his story, uncle Janes signaled for him to stop. 'Rubbish, don't believe it Jonas, you must be crazy! Look outside, you can see the soldiers walking around. You with your peaceful state; watch out that you don't get completely caught up in it all!'*

*A week later Jonas heard a great noise in the street going throughout Jerusalem. It must have happened again; the Romans had arrested a bunch of criminals. They were probably going to be killed on a cross.*





*That was, by now, a normality in Jerusalem. Jonas wanted to continue walking but was curious and looked at the criminals. There was that man, Jesus, dragging his cross down the street. Was this that nice man? Was he a criminal? Jonas tried to get closer. His eyes met those of Jesus. Now Jonas knew for sure, this was the Messiah. He believed it with his whole heart. The entire week Jesus' words had been burning in his heart. He believed it. Even his wife had asked Jonas what had happened. He was different, there was a peace about him, his wife had said.*

*But why had this man, the Messiah, been arrested? Peace wouldn't come this way. Wouldn't His disciples help him? Wouldn't they try and rescue Him? This cannot be happening! Jonas walked with the crowd and saw Jesus crucified. The world wouldn't be saved after all. Everything would remain the same Jonas thought. He walked home slowly, feeling sad. He couldn't understand a thing.*

*A week later Aram stormed into his house. 'Have you heard?' he called from afar. 'Have you heard?' Once Jonas had sat Aram down he heard the story. Some men had gone back to Jerusalem and had spoken to Jesus. He was still alive after all. At first they didn't know who He was but during the meal they saw that it was Jesus. He's alive? How can that be?*

*During the story Jonas sensed that feeling of peace again. The quietness was there. He remembered at once some of the words Jesus had spoken. He said that He would die and after three days would live again. It was true!*

*Then he knew what had changed. The world around him wasn't different. There was still violence, hunger and oppression, but he was different. Yes, he knew it, he was different. He was free. Completely free. He had been searching for years and it was now over. Jonas decided to believe the story. He wanted to find out more about this Kingdom which cannot be seen with your eyes, but which had been born deep in his heart. If maybe more people believed then the world could be changed. Just like it is with a seed. You plant it in the ground and many years later it becomes a tree.*