

Time Audit Chronicles: Paul in Rome

(Acts 28:1-31)

Prologue: The Final Journey

The Presswood family gathered in the garage, excited for their next adventure through the **Time Audit Machine**. They had been following **Paul's journey** in Acts and were about to witness the dramatic conclusion. Ariel was eager to see how Paul continued to preach the gospel despite incredible obstacles. Alice, as usual, clutched Mr. Fluffernutter and imagined herself on the **shipwreck** Paul had survived.

"Daddy," Ariel began, "how could Paul keep preaching even when he was under house arrest? Didn't that stop him from traveling?"

Ryan smiled, proud of Ariel's insightful question. "That's a great observation, Ariel. Even though Paul was under **house arrest**, he used every opportunity to preach about Jesus. He didn't let his circumstances stop him from fulfilling his mission. Instead of focusing on what he couldn't do, Paul focused on what he **could** do—welcoming visitors, writing letters, and sharing the gospel with anyone who would listen. Let's use the Time Audit Machine to experience this final chapter of Paul's story firsthand."

The Journey Begins: Surviving Malta (Acts 28:1-10)

The **Time Audit Machine** hummed to life, and the family found themselves on the rocky shore of the island of **Malta**, where Paul and his shipmates had washed up after a terrifying **shipwreck**. The locals, known as the **Maltese**, welcomed the survivors with kindness and built a fire to warm them.

As Paul gathered wood for the fire, a **viper** latched onto his hand. Ariel gasped, watching as the crowd stared in horror, convinced Paul was cursed and about to die.

"Look at their faces!" Ariel said. "They think he's doomed."

Ryan nodded. "In their culture, they believed that such a thing was a sign of divine punishment. But watch what happens next."

Paul calmly shook the snake into the fire and suffered no ill effects. The crowd was astonished, and their opinion shifted—now they thought Paul must be a god. Instead of basking in their awe, Paul pointed them toward **God's power** and began ministering to the people.

The family watched as Paul prayed for the island's chief, **Publius**, whose father lay sick with fever. Publius's father was healed, and soon many others on the island came to Paul for healing and prayer.

Ryan explained, "Paul's survival of the snakebite and the healings weren't just miracles—they were opportunities to point people to Jesus. Even on Malta, far from his planned destination, Paul kept sharing the gospel and serving others."

Arrival in Rome: Preaching Under House Arrest (Acts 28:11-16)

After three months on Malta, Paul and the survivors set sail again and finally reached **Rome**, the heart of the Roman Empire. The family watched as Paul was placed under **house arrest**, living in a rented home under the constant guard of a Roman soldier. Despite this confinement, Paul's spirit remained unbroken.

"Daddy," Ariel said, "how could Paul preach while under arrest? He couldn't go anywhere!"

Ryan gestured to the scene unfolding before them. "Paul couldn't travel, but he could still **welcome visitors**. He shared the gospel with everyone who came to see him—Jews, Gentiles, and even Roman soldiers. He also wrote letters to churches, many of which are now part of the **New Testament**, like Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians."

The family watched as Paul invited local Jewish leaders to visit him. With kindness and patience, he explained the **Kingdom of God** and how Jesus was the fulfillment of the **Law** and the **Prophets**. Some believed his message, but others rejected it.

Boldly Proclaiming the Kingdom of God (Acts 28:17-31)

As Paul continued his ministry, he welcomed all who came to him, "**Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.**" (Acts 28:31). Ariel noticed how calm and confident Paul seemed, even though he was a prisoner.

"Paul doesn't look worried at all," Ariel observed. "It's like he knows he's exactly where he's supposed to be."

"Yes," Ryan said, "Paul trusted that God had a purpose for him in Rome. Even though he was under **house arrest**, he was still fulfilling his mission to share the gospel. His courage and faith are a powerful example for all of us."

The family watched as visitors came and went, hearing Paul's message of **salvation through Jesus Christ**. Even some of the Roman soldiers guarding him were impacted by his words and began to believe in Jesus.

Ryan explained, "Paul's message was simple yet profound: the **Kingdom of God** is open to everyone who believes in Jesus. Paul didn't let his circumstances define his ministry—he used every opportunity to proclaim the truth."

Key Teaching: The Gospel Cannot Be Stopped

Back in the garage, the family reflected on the scene they had just witnessed. Ariel turned to Ryan, thoughtful. "So, even though Paul was under arrest, he kept sharing the gospel, and it kept spreading. It's like nothing could stop it."

“That’s exactly right,” Ryan said. “The story of Acts ends with Paul preaching the gospel in **Rome**, the center of the empire. Even though he faced incredible challenges—shipwrecks, snakebites, imprisonment—he never stopped trusting God or sharing the message of Jesus. His life shows us that the **gospel cannot be stopped**, no matter the obstacles.”

Alice, hugging Mr. Fluffernutter tightly, chimed in, “And even the mean guards started to believe in Jesus!”

Ryan smiled. “Yes, Alice, even the Roman soldiers began to see the truth. Paul’s faith and courage were a powerful witness, and the gospel continued to spread far beyond Rome, all over the world.”

Takeaway: Faithful Witness in All Circumstances

In **Acts 28**, Paul’s journey to Rome shows us the importance of being a faithful witness to the gospel, no matter the circumstances. From surviving a **snakebite** on Malta to preaching under **house arrest**, Paul’s life was a testament to his unwavering faith in God’s plan. He used every opportunity to proclaim the **Kingdom of God** and invite others to follow Jesus.

This passage reminds us that the gospel is unstoppable. Just as Paul continued to preach boldly despite his imprisonment, we too are called to share the good news of Jesus in every situation. When we trust in God’s purpose for our lives and rely on His strength, we can overcome any obstacle and remain faithful to our mission. The book of Acts concludes with Paul **boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God**, showing us that the story of the church is far from over—it’s a story we’re still part of today.