

Acts
The Unstoppable Advance of the Kingdom
Acts 12:1-24

One of the most famous paradoxical formulations of the Yin-Yang clash in western thought is, "What happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object?" An example would be testing the outcome of combining two chemicals that will dissolve anything in a bowl that is made out of indestructible alloy. It is used to describe the conflict between particularly strong or stubborn individuals.

1. The pride and wickedness of men will abound.

2. The prayers and please of the church will be heard.

3. The power and glory of God will prevail.

Luke reminds us that the mission of Christ and the advancement of His kingdom is unstoppable. Christ was and is building His church. We know from history and from experience that no matter how dark the world became and weak the church may have been at times, the gates of hell have not and will not prevail against it. We are not excluded from the conflict. We will face opposition in our task, but we have been equipped and trained to engage in the battle with boldness and courage. Our mission is unstoppable; our King is triumphant, and regardless of our current circumstances or our possible sacrifice, we can enjoy victory in His victory.

For further consideration

Why do you think we should expect opposition as we seek to advance the gospel? How does God use martyrdom to advance the kingdom? How does this story emphasize prayer and how does it encourage you to pray boldly? How do you think we should be looking for answered prayer? James and Peter were involved in the same mission and yet experienced two different outcomes. What does that tell us about God's sovereign plan for those who follow Him? Paul Tripp uses the term "glory thief." We can easily apply it to Herod, but in what ways do we exhibit "glory thief" behavior? In light of this story, take a few minutes to read Romans 8:31-39 and rest in the assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of God to those who are in Christ Jesus.