

# ADAMANT

FINDING  
TRUTH  
IN A UNIVERSE OF  
OPINIONS

LISA BEVERE



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# 1

## THE ADAMANT

Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and  
the quarry from which you were dug.

Isaiah 51:1

**F**or more than a year, I have pondered this verse and found myself captivated by the concept of this rock, this stone, this . . . *adamant*.

We know the word to mean immovable, impervious, and unyielding in opinion or position. And as such, the word *adamant* has gained a reputation for more than its fair share of stubbornness. But the adjectives and the adverbs we commonly associate with the term *adamant* are not the original meaning of the word. Adamant began as a noun and in so many ways as a dream.

The concept of adamant has a rather ancient and mythical history. Adamant was first known as a stone. Correction: as an unknown stone. It represented an elusive mineral whose

existence was hypothesized in ancient Greece. It was there that mathematicians, philosophers, and mystics first imagined the existence of a rock like none other, a stone woven so tightly that it would be simultaneously impenetrable and unbreakable. Void of fractures or fragments, it would be hard beyond measure and yet . . . irresistible.

This stone would have the singular ability to attract and repel objects. It would draw but not be drawn, be magnetic yet immovable. The stone would have a unique relationship with light. It would be capable of gathering rays, focusing them, and redirecting their radiance. Fire would not be able to penetrate its shell, and once drawn from the flames, the rock would be cool to the touch.

These are but a few of the traits theorized about this adamant ore. The troublesome part was the matter of discovering it. Would it be found in the dark heart of the earth? Were these stones born of fire and released from the belly of a volcano? Or were these stones of wonder hidden in the depths of the sea? Would the gods award them as a gift of merit?

The Greeks named the obscure stone *adamas*, which is best translated “invincible.” And even though there was not a shred of proof that *adamas* existed, they dreamed of ways this invincible stone could be put to use.

Weapons would be forged out of this mineral. *Adamas* would birth swords, axes, and knives that would not break in battle and shields that would not yield. The slenderest arrowhead fashioned of *adamas* would penetrate the most formidable target with ease. What of armor? Warriors cloaked in the impenetrable armor of *adamas* would be rendered invincible. Darkness would not stop them, for the rays captured

by adamas would blind their enemies even as the stone lit their way to victory.

The belief in this rock was so compelling that the theory of its existence spread northward through Europe until it reached the shores of Great Britain. It was there that the Greek word *adamas* became the word we know, *adamant*. And there the word waited to be revealed.

With the discovery of diamonds around 400 BC in India, it was thought that man had finally found the long-sought adamant. No other stone's strength compared with that of the diamond. Every rock born of inferior fire fragmented under the force of the diamond adamant. These gems were born in wombs of such intense fire and pressure that all lesser components were consumed and what remained was a singular element: carbon, bound in the crystalline form of a diamond.

For centuries, the words *adamant* and *diamond* were used interchangeably to describe all that was invincible, immovable, and indestructible. Both the prince of preachers, Charles Spurgeon, and Puritan legend John Bunyan echoed the words of the prophet Zechariah when he bemoaned the condition of adamant hearts impervious to the Word of God and harder than flint:

Yea, they made their hearts as an *adamant* stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. (Zech. 7:12 KJV)

More contemporary translations of this passage replaced the word *adamant* with the word *diamond*:

They made their hearts *diamond*-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the LORD of hosts.

It wasn't until the late 1700s that French scientist Antoine Lavoisier discovered that, given enough heat and oxygen, diamonds would actually evaporate. With this revelation, the words *diamond* and *adamant* were disassociated, and the search for the indestructible, immovable, invincible adamant faded. The word remained as a descriptor of what was never a reality. But men dreamed. The revered Arkenstone found in the writings of J. R. R. Tolkien seems a nod to the mythical origin of the adamant. For more than two millennia, people searched for and failed to find the adamant.

And yet I wonder . . .

What was the origin of this quest? Was this concept of the adamant a seed of inspiration planted by God? Why dream of what no one had yet seen, and why refer to the unknown? Or is this stone among us and unrecognized? Perhaps the adamant was never meant to be an implement of war and destruction but one of refuge and provision. Shouldn't the stone we seek welcome all?

Could the purpose of the adamant be to mine what is hidden within us? In a world where truth slips and slides according to the latest popular trend and current culture, wouldn't it be nice to have something that was constant?

Immovable?

Invincible?

Unchanging?

—◆—  
 Could the  
 purpose of the  
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 to mine what  
 is hidden  
 within us?

Perhaps these musings are nothing more than silly questions about a nonexistent stone. After all, we live in a time when no one goes on quests for stones of power. We are realists who have learned that stars are nothing more than luminous vapor. We have walked upon the barren moon and sent probes into the deep, dark caverns of the ocean floor. We have demystified much of what once inspired wonder.

And yet, stripped of our awe, we find ourselves clothed in confusion and comparison.

The highly educated often lack both purpose and opportunities.

We have bound ourselves to monetary systems of credit designed to entrap in debt those who purchase.

The political system created by our forefathers to unite the people now divides us.

Our networks are vast, but our connections are shallow and void of true intimacy.

We have chosen to become what we do and yet remain unfulfilled.

We use technology to throw stones at people we will never see.

When truth becomes fluid, we lose contact with answers larger than ourselves.

Real truth is a rock. Adamant. Indivisible. Immovable. Invincible.

Jesus is truth. And I propose that Jesus is the Adamant.

## **Jesus the Adamant**

No stone born of earth can stand before the living Stone. In Christ, all that the Greeks and the mystics looked for was

realized. He is our Rock, our Cornerstone, and our long-awaited Adamant. Christ alone is the unchanging Stone with the power to change everything. And long has the Rock of Ages been among us. As the children of Israel wandered the desert in what seemed to be an aimless pursuit, Moses declared the presence of this Rock:

The Rock, his work is perfect,  
for all his ways are justice.  
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,  
just and upright is he. (Deut. 32:4)

And after a season in the wilderness, David cried out to God on the day of his deliverance:

I love you, O LORD, my strength.  
The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my  
deliverer,  
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,  
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my  
stronghold. (Ps. 18:1–2)

The Old Testament Hebrew word used here for *rock* means “the inaccessible refuge.” The Rock is our strength, our sure footing in a world littered with gravel. Jesus is our stronghold when our enemies want to put us in a stranglehold. The Rock is our rescue, safeguard, and armor of defense. Christ anoints us with the oil of his Spirit and declares his salvation to our detractors.

In so many ways, we are all refugees on this earth looking for that high, secure, and sacred place. We long for the safety of a realm ruled by untainted justice. Like the Israelites, we have left behind our Egyptian taskmasters, but we have yet to master the enslaving voices that their cruelty imprinted

on us. Even so, the Rock accompanied us as we wandered in wildernesses of purpose and preparation, but we knew it not. It is time we acknowledge our brokenness and fall again upon the Rock that we might be mended.

And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him. (Matt. 21:44)

This verse refers to Jesus, who is both the Stone and the Son. Both were rejected by man though authored by God. The Son was the Stone that came to crush the oppressive kingdoms of man and act as the Cornerstone that establishes the kingdom of God. N. T. Wright highlights this profound connection:

And—just as in English the letters of the word “Son” are the same as the letters of the word “Stone,” with two more added, so in Hebrew, by coincidence, the letters of the word *ben* (son) are the same as those of the word *eben* (stone), with one more added.<sup>1</sup>

I am so thankful that in Christ we were added to both the Stone and the Son. In Christ, the isolated find their home and the many become one. Christ is the Stone fashioned from the mountain of God yet untouched by human hands. He is the Rock before which no earthly kingdom can stand. Daniel prophesied this confrontation with Christ our Adamant when he described both the hidden dream and the interpretation of the dream to King Nebuchadnezzar:

You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze,

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In Christ, the  
isolated find  
their home  
and the many  
become one.

its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. *But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.* (Dan. 2:31–35)

In Christ, a seed became a stone, and the stone grew into a mountain. The mountain that filled the whole earth is Zion, and the seed stone of this mountain is Christ. If we foolishly attempt to build our lives with the very materials that cannot stand the blow of the Stone, our pursuits will be shattered then scattered, blown by the winds of time. Jesus shakes all that can be shaken so that only the unshakable and true remain. Embrace the trembling, my friend. Let your heart quake, for he loves you far too much to allow you to be ensnared in half-truths and faulty

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Let your heart  
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in half-truths.

kingdom foundations once again. You were never meant to build with earthbound metals and soil. You were made to be a living stone.

### Living Stones

As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be

a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 2:4–5)

In the Message translation, this passage begins with “Welcome to the living Stone, the source of life.” In Christ, our hearts come alive, and we too become living stones, set in the body to realize our purposes. We are here to offer our lives in the service of building a spiritual house or sanctuary. We do not hold the role of builder. We are the raw material Christ uses to construct his church.

I love the word *sanctuary*. It is a preserve or shelter, a haven of safety, protection, and immunity. What a picture of our lives as adamant of safety! This is not a dead building. It is a refuge, vibrant with life, where we offer our Father our lives, just as the priests of the temple did. Peter continues this image in 1 Peter 2:6–8:

For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

I know sometimes things are said and done that make us want to go quiet about the fact that we are churchgoing Christians, but never for a minute should we be ashamed of our Cornerstone. Jesus is flawless. We are flawed diamonds that often diminish his radiance with our inclusions, but our Master Builder weaves us together so that the best of each of us is magnified and the flaws are redeemed.

People fail us.

People fail to see us.

We fail people and fail to see each other the way Jesus sees us.

But for all our days, we must honor Jesus, for he never disappoints. He was tested without faltering or failing. Jesus is committed to loving his flawed bride, the church, into radiance and readiness. Shouldn't we do the same?

In the book of Isaiah, we read:

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: 'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'" (28:16)

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**Jesus is  
committed  
to loving his  
flawed bride,  
the church,  
into radiance  
and readiness.**

The Hebrew word for *haste* means more than hurried—it also means “to be agitated and disturbed.” That’s a promise to us—to you and to me: we who believe will not be agitated or disturbed. We will be kept in perfect peace as our minds are stayed on our adamant Cornerstone (Isa. 26:3).

With Jesus, the focus shifted, and the cast-aside one (Jesus) became a home for the outcast.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet. 2:9–10)

Once we were not his; now we are. Once we were rejected; now we are accepted. Once we were divided; now in Christ we are one.

But you . . . but me . . . but we the many outsiders . . . were chosen by God and called to the priestly work of a holy people. We give witness to what he has done in our lives. His new is exchanged for our old, and our death is exchanged for his life. We embrace the Stone and cry out from the pile of our broken pieces by inviting our Cornerstone to make us whole. In Christ, we have gone from the rejected to the accepted. In him, we who were *nothing* got in on *everything*.

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In him, we  
who were  
*nothing* got in  
on *everything*.

Our Cornerstone is not a buried remnant of the past. Jesus is not a dead stone mined from the depths of the molten earth. Christ is the living Stone and as such the architect of our new beginning. He is an unchanging Stone with the power to change us.

## **Stones and Seeds**

In ancient architecture, the cornerstone was considered *the seed* from which the entire building would germinate. The cornerstone began the pattern that every other stone would follow. It was so important that the cornerstone be precisely set in place that builders would use the stars to align the cornerstone with the points of a compass. How beautiful that the stars declared the coming of our Cornerstone.

Our modern architecture no longer uses the cornerstone as the seed of a building. Our cornerstones are merely decorative

plaques added on after the building is complete to commemorate the date it was established. These cornerstones serve no structural purpose; they are simply a commemorative add-on. Conversely, Jesus is not a decorative add-on to our lives. He is our pattern and the seed from which our entire lives will come.

Not only is he our refuge and the seed of our foundation, but he is also our refreshing.

With the coming of Jesus Christ, Paul explains the Rock of Exodus to the church at Corinth: “For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ” (1 Cor. 10:4). As the Israelites followed Moses through the desert, they were refreshed by water from a rock—a rock that followed them. Christ was that Rock. Even then, the tender love and provision of God was present, and Jesus was their rearguard.

How curious.

This stone not only provided water for millions but also moved along with them. God appeared as a pillar of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night, and both day and night the rock that followed. This is such a beautiful picture of God’s ever-present care for the children of Israel as they traveled through the wilderness. Some rabbinic traditions say this was an actual rock that resembled a sieve, which rolled along with them and came to rest at the tent of meeting when they settled.<sup>2</sup>

Whether this wilderness rock literally or figuratively followed them, Paul is saying this rock represented the preexistent Christ, their ever-present rearguard. The rock foreshadowed Emmanuel, our always present Lord. Even now Christ is the Rock who travels with us through the wildernesses of life, refreshing us with living water.

He opened the rock, and water gushed out;  
it flowed through the desert like a river.  
(Ps. 105:41)

Life can be riddled with desert seasons, and deserts have a way of revealing our source of life. Some arid seasons last weeks, others months, and then there are those that stretch their parched hands over years. But no matter how desolate your current surroundings may seem or how long they last, there is a river hidden within your wilderness. This river is not around you; it is within you. If you are thirsty, if your life is desolate, cry out to the Rock.

On the cross, this Rock, Jesus, was opened once again, and this time blood and water flowed from his side . . . water to wash and blood to redeem.

The goodness of our Rock is impervious to our awfulness. As our Adamant encounters our flaws, they become as dust in the presence of his perfection. It is not that he is unaware of our violations. He sees the pain and shame that our willful choices bring upon ourselves and others. It is just that he cannot help but be what he is . . . good and merciful. He is the Lord and Savior of all, and any who throw their broken lives on his adamant mercy are transformed.

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He cannot help  
but be what  
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and merciful.

## A New Name

And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, *you are Peter*, and on this

rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:17–18)

“You are Peter.”

New life requires a renewed nature. A new nature requires the gift of a new name.

This declaration must have reverberated deep within Simon’s soul. What must it have felt like to be singled out and called a rock after he’d spent his entire life known by a very different name?

Simon. There was nothing wrong with this name. It just wasn’t big enough. It spoke of who he had been rather than who he was becoming. When we speak and say something different, we begin to see differently. Peter was the new name that fit his divine destiny.

Simon means “to listen and to hear.” It can also mean “reed-like and pliable in nature.” When we weave these two together, we find a name that could mean one who is bent in the direction of what they hear and listen to. In that light, we are all Simons, waiting to be renamed in the light of our destiny, for like him we tend to move in the direction of what we hear.

In this conversation with Simon, the name change foreshadowed our position in Christ, for he changes each of us from a swaying reed to a rampart of adamant.

Simon needed to transition from a fisherman to a fisher of men. The renaming of Simon closed the pages of an old book so God could take pen and paper in hand to write a new one.

I wonder if the name Peter felt odd at first. Or was it the name he had longed to be called all his life? Will the same be true for us? Did you know that in heaven we will all receive a stone with our truest name on it? Jesus promised:

To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him *a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.* (Rev. 2:17)

This new name declares victories. It is etched with how we conquered our fears and became who God created us to be. I find it fascinating that our new name is written in stone. To me this says that who we have been is in flux, but who we are becoming is eternal. Why would I choose to live in the confines of a name that fits my *now* when my Rock is fashioning one for me that will fit forever? I am alive to grow into the likeness of my new name.

Something shifts when what Jesus says about us becomes a part of us. In those moments, we glimpse a fraction of what it means to know as we are known. This is one of the many reasons why I love that it is Peter the rock who welcomes us to our Cornerstone.

This isn't the first time that Jesus worked with stone. When we think of carpenters, we think of those who work with wood, but in Jesus's day, carpenters were also "artificers in stone, iron and copper, as well as in wood."<sup>3</sup> Our Cornerstone was familiar with stones.

On earth, we are known by the name given by our parents. In eternity, we will have a new name known only to us. Until that time when the unknown is made known to us, we have the privilege of living in the wonder of the name of Jesus.

In Christ, rocks join together to form a holy mountain.

In Christ, small seeds grow into large trees.

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I am alive to  
grow into the  
likeness of my  
new name.

In Christ, hearts of rock become living stones.  
In Christ, the many become one.

### **Secure in Him**

Our position in Christ is not based on our ability to hold on. The moment we hide ourselves in him, we are secured in his ability to hold us. In Christ, our Rock, our Adamant, our Cornerstone, we are safe.

Recently, I flew into Chicago, and on the hour-long taxi ride to my hotel, my Muslim driver tried to convert me to Islam. He assured me that if I prayed every day and lived according to the tenets of Islam, there would be a chance I'd make it to paradise. It was a definite maybe. No guarantee, but there was a chance. He kindly offered me a place on a rock, with no promise. I was painfully aware that I could slip and fall off this rock. I choose to remain in Christ; I will fall but never outside of him.

We fall in him not off him.

In order that we might abide *in him*, God places a measure of his faith *in us*. We stumble when we place our faith in someone. We will never falter when our faith is in God. Let the faith of God have entrance in your life. Invite it in. You have tried and failed in your own strength. You have watched as others have faltered as they attempted to climb the scree-strewn rock of faith in the strength of self. Just because faith is unseen doesn't mean it doesn't exist or it won't happen. Faith is the hidden quickening of hope that leaps within us to help us believe there can be more. Faith gives us the courage to ask for more, to dare

to dream that in Christ we too can be adamant, immovable, and invincible.

## **Mountains**

We are invited to climb the mountains of our lives by God's strength, following in his footprints. Recently, I wrote this in my journal:

They call to me, these mountain heights, oh come away and be my delight. They lure me with mysteries beyond compare, known only by those who dare. But I am old and not as strong. Why did your call wait so long? He answered, "Yes, the climb is steep, but I am strong. Your youth renews as you follow the path I've set you on."

I live in Colorado with a view of the mountains all day long. So for me, God's whisper to follow him to the mountain makes sense. I don't know the geography of where you live, but know this—you have been invited to the ascent as well. Not to Sinai the stony mountain, whose very base could not be touched. You have been welcomed to Zion, a living mountain of wonder.

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. (Heb. 12:22–24)

Something happens as we step into the wonder of this invitation.

John Muir, the respected naturalist who championed the need for wild spaces, once said, “We are now in the mountains and they are in us, kindling enthusiasm, making every nerve quiver, filling every pore and cell of us.”<sup>4</sup> These words were penned to describe the wonder of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, an earthly range covered with nature and wildlife. How much more could this be said of a living mountain we could enter even as it enters us? For not only are we in Christ . . . but Christ is also the hope within us. Our hope comes from the Mount of Zion, even as we invite his reign within us.

May these pages serve as a welcome to all who have ever felt rejected and as a refuge to all who quake with fear. As you journey, may you enter into the wonder and solidarity of truth and escape the snare of confusion and earthbound opinions. Our Adamant has not moved; he has ever been with us.

*Dear heavenly Father,  
I choose to embrace all that it means to be a living  
stone and a royal priest. Be my refuge and my strength,  
my refreshing and my hope. Etch the name you have  
given me upon my heart. Christ, my Cornerstone and  
Adamant, the unmovable and invincible source of life,  
I fall upon you. Have your way in my life.*