



Links Players

Herman

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it. (Revelation 2:17)

Chances are, you've never heard of Herman Keiser. Herman served in the Navy during World War II. Yet, in 1946, the veteran was able to play in the Masters Tournament.

Herman was such an obscure player that he was never told about a change to his tee time. He was also assigned an inexperienced 13-year-old caddie and dealt with crowd-control issues during his final round.

Despite the challenging circumstances and grueling play, Herman Keiser persevered, defeated Ben Hogan, and became the victorious Masters champion.

I would love to say that he received the green jacket and became an honorary member of Augusta National, but the traditions of the green jacket and honorary membership had not yet begun. He did, however, receive an engraved gold medal and later became an honorary member retroactively.

He was no longer simply Herman Keiser, but Herman Keiser—the 1946 Masters champion. He had a new identity, along with his engraved medal and permanent invitation to play every year at Augusta National. It was a life-changing moment for Herman.

The apostle John, in the book of Revelation, tells the church at Pergamum that its members will also receive a reward if they persevere. Pergamum was a city just miles from the Aegean Sea, known for its cultural achievements and cult worship, including a towering altar to Zeus, a Roman god.

These were difficult times for Jesus' followers in a city dubbed "Satan's throne." The popular culture stood in sharp contrast to the Christians' way of life. That is why, when John wrote to the church in Pergamum, he relayed the message that those who are victorious will be given some hidden manna and a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.

How many times had I glossed over that passage and ignored such a green-jacket moment?

Hidden manna is a reference to God's daily provision. Just as God provided daily sustenance for the Israelites during their 40 years in the wilderness, He will provide for the daily needs of anyone who depends on Him.

This same manna—this miraculous provision from God—has not changed or lessened for those of us who remain faithful in our difficult and opposing culture.

And then there's the white stone. When someone was accused of a crime in Greek or Roman courts, they were given a black stone if found guilty or a white stone if found innocent. A white stone also allowed someone to enter great banquets or celebrations as an honored guest.

So, here is the church at Pergamum reading this letter from John, telling its members that if they remain faithful, they will be found innocent and given the right to attend a great banquet or celebration. This stone was their admission ticket. The stone, with their new name written on it, signified a special relationship between the giver and the receiver.

Just like Herman, those who overcome can trust that Jehovah-Jireh will provide a way through difficult times. He will give us a white stone signifying our innocence through the blood of Jesus and a seat at the banquet table as His honored guests.

Stay the course. Keep your eyes on the prize.

Prayer: God of our forefathers, thank You for the reassurance of our place with You in Your kingdom. For Your provision, salvation, and the identity You have given us, we are eternally grateful. Amen.

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