

"A Johannine Moment - A One Minute Double-strike"

(You don't know Jack until you have been "Sponged" by a Jewish Mystic)

Chapter 23¹ - Peter: The Struggle Within the Soul

While reading Jack Spong's book on the Fourth Gospel (4G) I was personally irritated by reading about Peter (and three chapters are devoted to him). Never have liked this guy nicknamed Peter. He has always come across to me as a wuss.

Well, I got 'Sponged' today by Jack as he (again) drove home "this gospel should never be approached or read simplistically" (p. 216).

Every time I have seen the name Peter I have kind of dismissed him with "Here goes Dummy again" - until today. Peter does, however, show up more times than I realized in 4G. I also see him under and in the name 'disciples' but really it is the questions he asks - he seems to just not get it.

- * Peter asks Jesus if he can walk on water (from Matt. 14) and he sinks and has to be rescued.
- * As many disciples were leaving in John 6:66, Jesus asks the twelve if they wish to leave also. Peter asks (almost as a spokesman) "To whom do we go?"
- * In 13 as Jesus came to Peter to wash his feet Peter asks "Are you going to wash my feet?" It was almost a fight, Peter's ego gets in the way and he was unable to hear. Jesus told him one day he would understand - sounds like some of us, maybe?
- * And in the garden, in front of a detachment of Roman soldiers and some policemen, he pulls out his sword and cuts an ear off of the high priest's slave...today this would be like pointing a gun at a SWAT team.
- * Then, after the arrest Peter goes through his three denials. "Bravado is demolished. The crow of the cock is heard. They take Jesus away. Peter enters the dark night of his soul" (p. 231).

And so "Peter wants to *become*. He does not know how to be, how to live fully. Peter wants to survive. This is the deepest drive present in *every* living thing" (p. 231).

Being "Sponged"

"We brag to hide our fear...
We lie to cover our inadequacy...
We push others down to elevate ourselves...
That is what is going on in Peter...
That is who I am. That is who you are --..."

Johannine moment:

"The story of the cross is the story of ~~Peter~~ Gary confronting the 'Word of God'" (p. 231 - double strike through mine!).

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¹ Spong, John Shelby. (2013). The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic. New York, NY: Harper One.