

# Saints and sinners: Saint gets special place in Heaven

The name of this column is "Saints and Sinners." Mostly it is about sinners. Paul Murphy was one of the saints.

When I first met him, he was a bus driver for the city transit system in Boston, and I was a radio broadcaster. Paul came into the station wearing his bus driver's uniform. He was fat, and he reminded me of Ralph Kramden, the bus driver in Jackie Gleason's "The Honeymooners."

Paul was looking for help. For a period of several months, he and his wife had visited a friend at Holy Ghost Hospital in Cambridge, Mass. During that time, they made the acquaintance of Eleanor Marvin, who was sharing the room with their friend.

Eleanor, who was 39, had been a bedridden patient at the hospital for eight years, a victim of multiple sclerosis. She was originally from

Colorado, so her acquaintances around Boston were few to start with. After eight years, they had dropped off almost completely.

The Murphy's' friend went home eventually, but Eleanor remained, and Paul couldn't get her out of his mind.

He kept thinking of her sitting there with nothing to look at but the four walls and the ceiling.

It was while thoughts like these were going through his mind that Paul got an idea. Why couldn't one hire an ambulance to take people like Eleanor on sightseeing tours around town? That would give them something to talk about for a long time.

He made some calls. An ambulance, he found, would cost \$15 an hour at that time. Paul set out to raise the money. He passed the hat among his fellow bus drivers and raised \$54.10



**george plagenz**

• saints & sinners

— more than enough for a three-hour trip for Eleanor.

Eleanor had the time of her life. She saw all the sights in Boston she had long been waiting to see. When it was time for supper, she asked to go to Howard Johnson's.

"For over eight years I have been craving a grilled frankfurter," she said. "Not a boiled one but a grilled one — with piccalilli, mustard and all the fixings, just like you would have on a

picnic."

Two days after the trip, Paul got a thank-you note from Eleanor.

"It was one of the most blissful days I have ever spent," she wrote. "That night, for the first time as far back as I can remember, I slept like a baby for the entire night."

Paul didn't stop there. He arranged other tours. A 25-year-old mother, a polio patient, was taken to see the Christmas lights. Seven more tours in all were set up in the next four months.

Somehow, Paul was always able to come up with the money, but now his resources were running thin.

To make a long story short, I broadcast Paul's saga on the radio and asked my listeners to send in money if they could. In a week, we had raised \$1,000.

That was the beginning of Para-Tours (para

for paralytic).

For 16 years, Paul carried on with his brainchild. For 11 of those years — until he was 65 — he continued to drive a city bus to make ends meet. But his heart was in Para-Tours.

The money never rolled in (far from it), but through the years it became easier to raise. Paul, of course, never kept a penny of it.

Then, one day I got a letter from him.

"Every passing day is bringing me closer to my 70th birthday," he said, "and I know that the work involved in the continuance of Para-Tours will be getting ever more taxing. God has been generous in giving me good health to do this work. But now I must stop."

So, Paul was closing up shop. I remember thinking that it must be nice to be able to look forward to retirement knowing that your place in heaven is already assured.

# From pillars of salt to burning bush, author walks the Bible history

By Beth J. Harpaz

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Ever wonder how manna from heaven tasted, where Noah's ark landed, or whether a pillar of salt still stands to mark the fate of Lot's wife?

Bruce Feiler, author of "Walking the Bible" (William Morrow, \$26), could tell you. He spent a year tracking down places and phenomena associated with the first five books of the Bible, and in the process, traversed three continents, five countries and four war zones.

Along the way, he encountered a rare shrub that bears flaming red berries, said to be the burning bush from Moses' first encounter with God; outcroppings of minerals by the Dead Sea, two stories high, which are literally pillars of salt; and a credible explanation for manna from heaven — sweet, edible

white globs that appear on certain oasis trees in the late spring.

But by the time Feiler was done with his journey, his mission had changed.

"When I first started I was consumed with issues of proof," Feiler said in an interview. "Which rock? Which mountain? Which body of water? In many ways, that's what drew me in."

But, he added, "the longer I did it, the less I became interested in proof, and the more I became interested in meaning. And my view on this is that we're not going to prove the Bible. But we're not going to disprove it, either."

Feiler said the original writers of Biblical stories "were not writing a textbook," they were crafting the story of how their culture and faith came into being.

Feiler added that nobody in the Middle East ever "brings up this issue of proof. It's only the people who live far

away who seem consumed by this problem. Because the closer you live to the land, the more you become persuaded that these stories live in these places."

Feiler's quest began a few years ago after he visited a friend in Jerusalem.

"My friend took me to this promenade overlooking the city and said, 'Over there is this controversial neighborhood — and over there is the rock where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac,'" Feiler recalled. "It just hit me like a bolt of Cecil B. De Mille lightning. It never occurred to me that these stories — so timeless and abstract — might have happened in places you could visit. And I thought, here's an idea. What if I travel along the route and read the Bible along the way?"

Feiler hired Avner Goren, former chief archaeologist of the Sinai during the years that Israel controlled the re-

gion, to accompany him. The journey began in the summer of 1998 in Turkey, at Mount Ararat, described in Genesis as the final resting place of Noah's ark, and continued in the ancient city of Harran, where God first spoke to Abraham.

They then traveled down the spine of Israel and the Palestinian territories to sites associated with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Next was Egypt, where Joseph was enslaved and Moses was born. Following the path of the Israelites fleeing Egypt, Feiler and Goren crossed the Red Sea and then the desert, traveling by foot, jeep, rowboat, and camel through Israel to Jordan. They ended the journey in the summer of '99 on Mount Nebo, where Moses died gazing at the promised land.

But what made the biggest impact on Feiler was their sojourns in the desert

— dependent on canned food and bottled water, roasting in the sun and freezing at night, sleeping in tents, awed by the stars and sunrises.

"As Avner likes to say, you can't spend three days in the desert and not believe in God," he said. "You realize how dependent you are on the elements, and ultimately, how small you are."

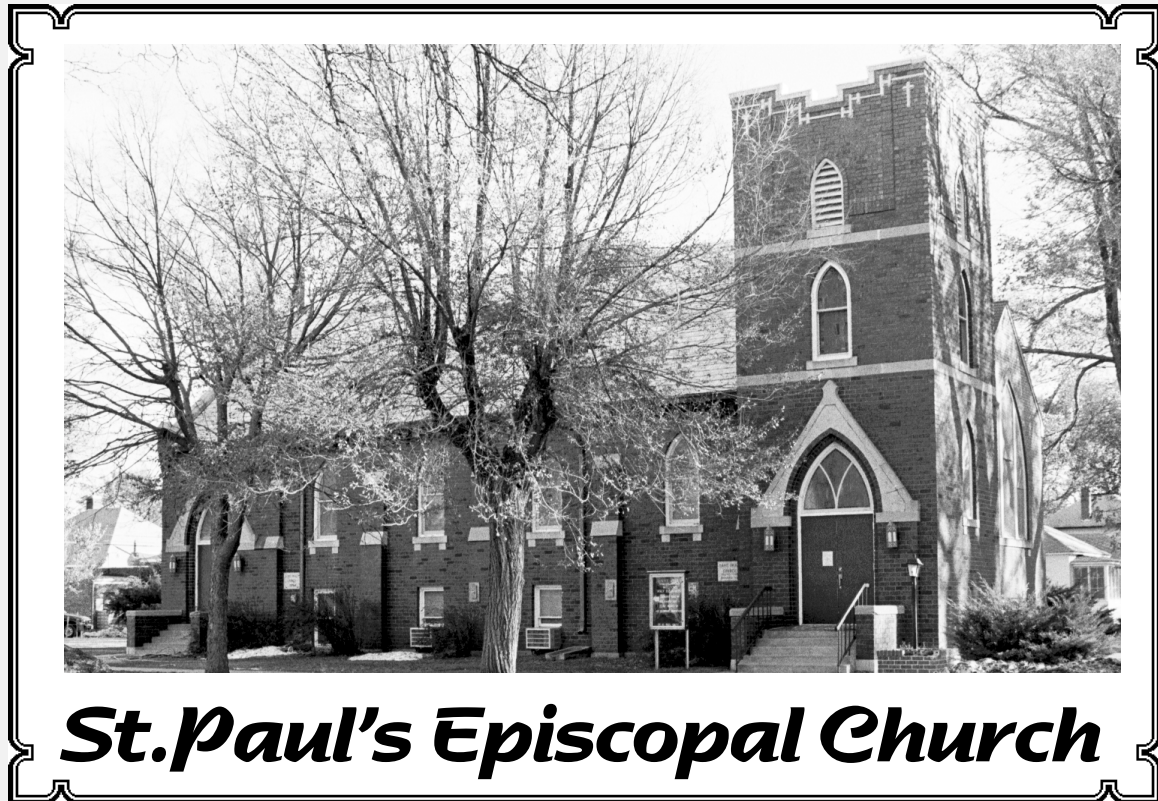
Feiler prepared for his trip by reading 150 books — everything from Lawrence of Arabia to Thomas Mann, from rabbinic commentary to politics and history. But during the trip, "my learning went from my head to my feet," he said. "By walking in these places, by being on the ground, I developed a very tangible connection to these places."

Feiler describes licking the pillar of salt, noticing a fire extinguisher sitting next to the burning bush, and suffering

exquisite pain in certain body parts after riding a camel for eight hours. He introduces us to the people he meets — Muslim, Christian, Jew, scholar, politician, bedouin and soldier, from the guard who takes a bribe to open up a closed museum in Egypt, to the shepherd girls in Jordan whose chatter wakes him up at 4 a.m.

And as a journalist, not a scientist, he offers various theories without judgment, noting, for example, there are 22 candidates for the "real" Mount Sinai.

"Walking the Bible" made bestseller lists shortly after its release, joining other popular books about religion and spirituality, from Anita Diamant's "The Red Tent," a novel told from the perspective of Joseph's sister Dinah, to "The Prayer of Jabez," by Bruce Wilkinson, to Karen Armstrong's "Buddha," a biography.



**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**

**Bible Baptist Church**  
**Pastor:** Don Crutcher  
 Fifth & Broadway  
 899-7368  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9 am  
 Worship Service: 10 am  
 Evening Service: 6:30 pm  
**Wednesday:** Evening Bible Study: 7 pm

**Calvary Gospel Church**  
**Pastor:** Rev. Steve Rains  
 Fourth & College • 899-3605  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
 Morning Worship: 10:30 am  
 Evening Worship: 6:30 pm  
**Wednesday:** Family Night: 7 pm  
 Adult Bible Study and Youth Group  
**Saturday:** Prayer Meeting: 5-7 pm  
*If you would like to receive a free newsletter, please call the church office.*

**Church of Christ**  
 401 Caldwell  
 899-6185  
**Sunday:** Bible Study: 9:45 am  
 Worship Service: 10:45 am  
 Evening Service: 6 pm  
**Wednesday:** Bible Study: 7 pm

**Church of the Nazarene**  
**Pastor:** Matthew Delp  
 Third & Caldwell  
 899-2080 or 899-3797  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:45 am  
 Worship Service: 10:50 am  
 Evening Service: 6 pm  
**Wednesday:** Evening Service: 7 pm

**First Baptist Church**  
**Pastor:**  
 Fifth & Center • 899-3450  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
 Morning Worship: 10:30 am  
 Evening Worship: 6 pm  
**Tuesday:** Mens' Prayer Group: 5:30 am  
**Thursday:** Ladies' Bible Study: 10 am

**Seventh Day Adventist Church**  
 1160 Cattletrail  
**Pastor:** Bobby Potter • 332-3956  
**Saturday:** Sabbath School: 9:30 am  
 Worship Service: 11 am

**First Christian Church**  
 (Disciples of Christ)  
**Pastor:** Loren Strait  
 Eighth & Arcade • 899-5233  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
 Worship Service: 10:30 am  
**Activities:** Junior High & High School Youth Groups,  
 Adult Bible Study, Choir, Men's and Women's Groups,  
 Devotions Study, Monthly Fellowship  
**Special Notice:** Handicap Accessible, Hearing  
 Assistance Equipment and Infant and Toddler  
 Nurseries Available

**First United Methodist Church**  
 1116 Sherman  
 899-3631  
**Pastor:** Rev. Carol Moore-Ramey  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
 Worship Service: 10:30 am

**Sonrise Christian Church**  
 Ninth & Caldwell • 899-5398  
**Minister:** Tony Kaika  
**Youth Minister:** Doug Bean  
**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9:30 am  
 Sunday School: 10:45 am  
**Wednesday:**  
 Junior/Senior High Meeting: 7 pm  
 Adult & Children's Classes: 7 pm

**Emmanuel Lutheran Church**  
 13th & Sherman • 899-6161  
**Pastor:** Scott Grimshaw  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 8:45 am  
 Worship Service: 10 am  
**Wednesday:** Confirmation: 6 pm

**Kanorado**  
**United Methodist Church**  
**Pastor:** Leonard Cox  
 399-2468  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9 am  
 Worship Service: 10:15 am

**Goodland Bible Church**  
 109 Willow Road • 899-6400  
**Pastor:**  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:45 am  
 Morning Worship: 11 am  
 Evening Worship: 6 pm  
**Wednesday:** Call for location

**Grace Fellowship Church**  
 104 E. Hwy 24 • 899-6423  
**Pastor:** Bob Snyder • Residence: 899-0134  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 10 am  
 Worship Service: 11 am

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
 13th & Center  
 899-2115 or Rectory 899-2114  
**Priest:** Father Charles Schneider  
**Deacon:** Gretchen Talitha  
**Saturday:** Church School: 4 pm  
 Holy Communion: 5 pm  
**Wednesday:** Bible Study: 7 pm  
 Sr. Warden for emergencies during the week 899-2067

**Church of Jesus Christ**  
**of Latter-Day Saints**  
 1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO • (970) 664-2470  
**Sacrament Meeting:** 9:30 am  
**Sunday School:** 10:45 am  
**Priesthood/Relief Society:** 11:30 am

**Word of Life Foursquare Church**  
 223 E. 10th  
 899-5250  
**Pastor:** John Coumerilh  
**Sunday:** Worship Celebration &  
 Kids' Church: 10:30 am

**United Methodist Church**  
**Brewster:**  
**Pastor:**  
 Worship Service: 10:45 am CST  
 Sunday School: 9:45 am CST  
**Winona:**  
**Minister:** Rev. Bob Winters  
 Worship Service: 9 am CST  
 Sunday School: 10:15 am CST

**Iglesia Del Dios Vivo**  
 La Luz Del Mundo  
 Spanish Speaking Church  
**Minister:** Esteban Ortiz B.  
 1601 Texas • 899-5275  
**Daily Prayer:** Sunday thru  
 Saturday: 5 am & 6 pm  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 10 am

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help**  
**Pastor:** Father Daryl Olmstead  
 307 W. 13th • 899-7205  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**  
 4:30-5 pm Saturday or by appointment  
**Mass Schedule:**  
 Saturday: 6 pm  
**Sunday:** 8 am and 10:30 am  
**Spanish Mass:**  
 1st & 3rd Sunday: 2 pm

**Pleasant Home Church**  
 Serving the rural community for over 100 years  
 Rt. 1, Box 180 • 694-2807 • 3190 Road 70  
**Pastor:** Jim Cress  
 899-5784  
**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9 am  
 Sunday School: 10 am  
 Evening Service: 6 pm

**The following sponsors urge YOU to attend your chosen House of Worship this Sabbath:**

<b>Short &amp; Son Trucking</b> Hwy. 24	<b>Koons Funeral Chapel</b> North Main	<b>Golden Wheat Ranch</b> Office 110 E. 11th	<b>Goodland Daily News</b> 1205 Main
<b>Good Samaritan Center</b> 208 W. 2nd	<b>Goodland Motor Co.</b> Hwy. 24	<b>Topside Office Products, Inc.</b> 1110 Main	