



Ken Dewey standing in the Desert near where he first found the alabaster stone

## **AN EARLY BEGINNING EXPERIENCE LEADING TO DESERT ZION**

**By Ken Dewey**

Years ago, in about 1986, long before I even came to New Mexico, I was living in Idaho, working as a Home Missionary, and working as a Missionary. I did have to travel a lot back and forth to Texas and other states to Churches in the South and East to raise more funds to fund my Mission. The following is an account of an Experience I had in the Desert, at a certain spot on a remote desert road.

Little did I even know, at the time of the experience, that sometime in the Future I would be back to this very place, even living and working nearby and building a Place called Desert Zion!

**THIS IS THE ACCOUNT OF THE EVENT**

I was traveling by car from Idaho into Texas and was going East on Interstate 40 near Grants, New Mexico and headed into Albuquerque. I was in a hurry and hated to have to go through the big city of Albuquerque, so I was looking for a way around, When I saw State Road 6 on my road atlas. Wow, I said, by taking this road [around] I would not only save many miles but also time. I was headed for I-25 going south. The small State Road led through the desert to a town called Los Lunas, NM and it did by-pass the city.

I TOOK THE TURN and proceeded East on it headed into the desert of New Mexico near Los Lunas. As I traveled, I came to a “certain place” in the road.

**SUDDENLY I FELT I MUST PULL OVER AND STOP.** The urge was more than I could resist. I pulled to the side of the road and stopped, stepping out of the car I looked to the South and was totally intrigued in my spirit. **WHAT IS HAPPENING I SAID TO MYSELF? WHAT IS IT ABOUT THIS PLACE THAT IS SO INTRIGING TO ME?** Walking back and forth, I looked over an old barb wire fence into the barren desert mountains and valleys before me. I felt it was literally drawing me to come; I was being drawn into this desert place.

You must know I have always been one interested in going into the back country looking for rocks, and just exploring. Traveling on old roads till they ran out, then driving farther off road to find the very remote place. This place did seem almost impossible to resist.

But I did not have time to wonder off into the Desert, though I really wanted to, I finally got back into the car and proceeded on my journey.

Many years later, after I had left Idaho and was living in Texas, I found myself moving to New Mexico. It had been somewhat a dream of mine, for I had always enjoyed the mountains and valleys and history of the place. Now I was “actually moving” to New Mexico! [I will not now go into the reasons I was even moving for it is too long of a story to tell here, but you will have to read my testimony.]

I did move to New Mexico, and shortly after moving, I was living near some lifelong friends. One day shortly after arriving there, these Friends begin to talk about A PLACE DOWN SOUTH IN THE DESERT WE COULD GO TO EXPLORE. My friend was akin to a relator, broker, who knew where a Large Ranch was for sale. He suggested that we all go to the area and look over the Ranch that was for sale, and it would give us a good excuse to go into the backcountry of New Mexico and spend the day looking around for interesting sights, rocks, and history. So, we all loaded up in a car and set out for a day in the outback. We were so excited about going to a new place away from all the main roads and in the country.

As we traveled, the road led STRAIGHT THE SPOT IN THE ROAD WHERE I HAD YEARS BEFORE HAD THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE!

WOW, I exclaimed, I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE and then begin to relate, to my friends, my experience traveling [now some years later]. I was amazed to be there, and even more excited now about going out into the area and spending time just looking around; now I was free to go!

It was on this trip that we drove on a remote two- lane dirt ranch road in the desert. As we moved along, I saw a beautiful vein of red stone in the ground running across the dirt road. STOP! WHAT IS THIS? Getting out we examined the beautiful stone strata and found it to be soft and carve able with a pocketknife. Not knowing what we had found, I loaded some small pieces into the car to take back to town.

In town I found out later it was Alabaster, and we had discovered a vein of Red Alabaster in the Desert!

THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF MY JOURNEY TO BECOMING A STONE SCULPTOR. For on this trip, I was caught up in the sculpting of stone to sell and make money.

Little did I know, this place became a very common place to me, for I did begin to explore, dig stone, and make sculptures. This then GOT ME INTO THE DESERT IN THE VERY SPOT

WHERE I WOULD LATER ON HAVE A GOD ENCOUNTER. During this God Encounter I was transformed, forgiven of my spiritual departure from God and from preaching, and set upon a totally new road of my life.

I know now that the place, Desert Zion, is located only about 15 miles from this mysterious desert place, and the Vision of it came clearly into view through my desert wondering in that remote place.

In another Experience, some years later, the Lord told me outright, **I HAD IT ALL PLANNED FOR YOU TO COME HERE TO THIS PLACE.**

Now I look back I understand how the call came about, and when the Lord did begin to lead me. It is clear, to me now, that He begin MANY YEARS BEFORE I EVEN DREAMED OF A PLACE CALLED DESERT ZION.

God is awesome in his foreknowledge, and He is wonderful in His plans. God had Desert Zion in mind MANY YEARS BEFORE, and he brought me by his providence into this desert and “set me up” to finally reveal to me His Plans. All the time he was doing this Work, I did not know anything his plan, for he had not yet fully explained them to me. God then has us moving in His Plans, and many times we do not even realize it until we can look back and see how He did it.

Desert Zion is GOD’S PLAN. It is His and His alone, for He is the One who has given the Vision.