

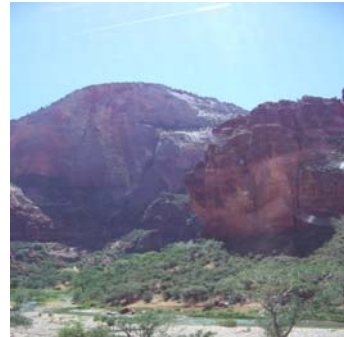


Freedom's Road Newsletter

Written by Freddy Freedom

Zion

Leaving the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, my "Master Plan" was to head to Page, Arizona for a raft trip down the Colorado then straight to Zion National Park. Flashbacks of the last couple days kept running through my mind. I wondered if the rest of the trip would be a disappointment...could anything rival the Grand Canyon?



I was told about a raft trip that left outta Page, Arizona by the camp host at the campground I stayed in at the Grand Canyon. Page is a neat little town, literally just across the road from Lake Powell. It was originally set up by the government to house the workers when the Glen Canyon Dam was being built to form Lake Powell. Lake Powell is the second biggest man made lake in the country, with 1,960 miles of shoreline. That's more shore than the whole west coast of the United States! It's 500 feet deep and took 17 years for the Colorado River to fill the lake once the dam was finished! There's a ton of things to see and do in and around the lake; like interior tours of the dam, houseboat rentals and raft trips. Lake Powell and the surrounding areas, including Capitol Reef, is definitely a place worth planning a trip to, but my mission now was to book a raft trip down the mighty Colorado.

The raft trip was super. A "little" pricey, at \$80 a hit, but the tour guide had lots of interesting stuff to share as we floated along. One particular tidbit I found interesting was that the deep black and brown colors on the canyon walls aren't the rocks actual colors, it's called "Desert Varnish". What happens is manganese gets squeezed outta the rocks then iron oxide, bacteria and other stuff in the air sticks to the rocks and turns black. It hardens and the wind polishes it, making it look like dark rocks. Pretty cool, to say the least, when it comes to paintin' God really knows how to put an interesting twist on how to do it.

The ride across US 89 to Zion is a relaxing 100 mile ride, good thing, 'cause once you turn on to Utah Route 9, which leads into Zion, you'll be on pins and needles! First there's the "tunnel", which is a little over a mile of pitch black dark. There is an occasional exhaust hole cut in the side, but not a lotta light gets in. Then there's the punishing, daunting mission of trying to conquer the rest of Route 9 to get to a campground. Hint: don't believe the line on the map, that road ain't straight!! All I can tell ya about Route 9 is-hang on to your ape hangers for dear life! If you make it, you'll have earned your braggin' rights, that's for sure! Word to the wise, stay in your low gears and keep your RPMs high, you're gonna need all the torque your scoot can muster!

Any doubt that Zion wouldn't measure up vanished faster than a keg at a bike rally! It's incredible. One of these days I'm gonna learn to never doubt God. The contrast between having to look down at everything at the canyon and now having to look up is like seeing a mirror image! Looking up at the towering rock formations, some over 1,000 feet was beyond anything I could've imagined. God was on a roll that day!



You can't ride through the park; you have to take the shuttle. I know, I thought the same thing, "I wanna do my own thing", but that's what makes the shuttle so cool. Before the shuttles, the road was so clogged you couldn't see anything or get anywhere and the emissions were terrible. As one shuttle driver put it, "imagine 7,000 vehicles all idling, trying to navigate a narrow two-lane, 8 mile stretch of road all at the same time and all fighting for 500 parking spaces!" So the shuttle system was born.

The original road was designed to take you to all the points of interest, that hasn't changed. Now you get on the shuttle and it stops at each point. If you wanna see a point of interest, then get off, if not, stay on to the next point. If you do get off you can stay for as long as you want because the buses run at about 6 to 8 minute intervals from before sun up to around 11PM. The buses are all glass and air conditioned. You can actually see the wonders of the park instead of having to concentrate on driving. The shuttle drivers really have a lot of information to share with ya, just ask and you shall receive, they really know the park.

Here's the kicker, you've been out doin' your Lewis and Clark thing, you're hot and tired when you get back to the bus stop. In just a few minutes an air conditioned bus picks ya up! How cool is that? Or as Freddy would say, "that's slicker-then-snot on a door knob!"

Fill your tank, next stop Bryce Canyon.

Hope to see ya on the road. Upright that is!
Have a question or comment? hywayrebel@gmail.com



Hogs In Ministry

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom 10:13