May 15th - 22nd marks the 8th Annual Hip-Hop Appreciation Week. Our theme this year is Freedom. Different from Liberty which has to do with moving freely about one's environment, freedom is a condition that is experienced within one's self. You must Feel free in order to actually Be free. Are you free? Or are you waiting to be freed? Most people have been freed; they are not free. Most people are waiting for some thing or some one outside of themselves to give meaning and/or movement to their lives. Are you free? Do you think for yourself? Or does outside opinions and conditions constantly making up your mind for you?

This year's Hip Hop Appreciation Week May 15th - 22nd 2005 will be a time set aside for all true Hiphoppas to meditate upon the question of freedom. Are we really free? What does it take to be free? What does freedom mean to us? Is freedom even important to us? Even beyond the concept of freedom for political or social point of view, spiritual point of view rooted in the universal desire to be unrestrained and fully developed.

In addition, as a (Hip-hop) community let us come up with clever ways to actually free each other from the bondage that we face everyday. Let us find ways to relieve one another and free one another from mundane routines of life. Let us free each other from debt through charity. Let us free each other from guilt through forgiveness. Volunteer your time to a parent that can really use a break from kids. Let us free each other up! Only those that think and feel free can even attempt to free someone else. How can you aid in someone else's freedom if you are not free yourself?

These questions point to the essence of one's character. Regardless of how much money you many have, or how popular and/or successful you many be; are you truly free? How dependent is your sense of well-being upon external things? How free are you really? During Hip Hop Appreciation Week May 15th-22nd let us create events and discussions around the concept of freedom. Any Hiphoppa with exceptional organizing skills and a love for Hiphop can promote Hip Hop Appreciation Week within his/her city. But most of all; let us evaluate our own levels of personal freedom and seek ways to relieve the bondage of others. God has already blessed us. I'll see you at the Temple.

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