

**January 1, 2023**

The Lord wants you to live in His liberty and freedom.

**John 8:36** *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (NIV)*

This amazing verse is in the midst of a narrative between the Pharisees and Jesus: vv. 48-59 *The Jews answered Him, "Aren't we right in saying that You are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?" "I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor Me. I am not seeking glory for Myself; but there is One who seeks it, and He is the judge. Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys My word will never see death." At this they exclaimed, "Now we know that You are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet You say that whoever obeys Your word will never taste death. Are You greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do You think you are?" Jesus replied, "If I glorify Myself, My glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as Your God, is the one who glorifies Me. Though you do not know Him, I know Him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and obey His word. Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing My day; he saw it and was glad." "You are not yet fifty years old," they said to Him, "and you have seen Abraham!" "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I Am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone Him, but Jesus hid Himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. (NIV)*

Now notice what Jesus says in response to their accusation that He could not have seen Abraham. Jesus replies, before Abraham was born, I AM! He is using the very same words that the LORD used with Moses when he asked God, if Pharaoh asks what my God's name is, what should I tell him? The LORD replied, I AM! YAHWEH! This name was too sacred to the Jewish people to even be spoken. These religious men were trapped in their deeds rather than knowing the LORD. Our God wants to free people from this religious quest and establish a real relationship with His creations. The key is found in today's verse. Only a relationship with Jesus will set you free. Free from the bondage of religion. Free from the chains of duty. Free from putting on a mask in front of others. Do you want to live in this freedom? So do I.

**Dear LORD, help us today to receive Your freedom. You have made a way for us to truly commune with You. You are I AM. In Jesus Name, Amen**