

Experiments with Bible Study

Hans-Ruedi Weber, *Experiments with Bible Study* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981),

8. Salvation: How Do We Say It Today?

In the Hebrew language the verb 'to save' means 'to provide open space for the oppressed.' The word 'salvation' is first used in the Bible in connection with a political liberation. More than 3000 years ago some tribes of the people of Israel were forced into slave labor in Egypt. They had to build garrison towns for the army of the mighty Pharaoh Rameses II. Ancient mural paintings found in Egypt show Israelite laborers at work, carrying heavy stones while being cruelly beaten by slave drivers. Israelite cried out to God, God called Moses and sent him to Pharaoh, and Israelites finally received salvation. That means that they were given room to move, out of the prison of slavery in to the open space of the desert. There they found not only space to live in but the space God lives in. ..It not only opens the space by which prisoners can move out into freedom; it also opens the space, heaven, from where God reaches down and makes a marriage covenant with his people. 120