

**Letter written to Followers in Halle, <sup>1</sup>**

**19 March 1523**

Greetings and the constant and eternal mercy of God be with you, my dearest brothers.

I ask you not to be angered at my expulsion, for it is under such attacks that the abyss of the soul is purged, so that it becomes more and more cleansed and discerning, and can draw from the unconquerable witness of the holy spirit. No one may experience God's mercy unless he is utterly abandoned, as Isaiah clearly said in the 28<sup>th</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> chapters: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee and with great mercies will I gather thee." There is also what Christ our saviour said: "If I go away, then the Comforter will come to you, the holy spirit." This cannot be given to anyone except those who are without comfort. So let my suffering be a good example to you. Let the weeds flourish as they will, they will at length have to come under the flail along with the pure wheat, the living God thus makes his scythe sharp within me, so that I can later cut down the red poppies and the blue cornflowers.

I hereby send you my greetings. Trust yourselves to God. Anyone who is able to do so should share with me the wages of the gospel: "The workman is worthy of his wages," Matthew 10. But if this request annoys anyone, then he should not give me anything. It would be better to die than to question the honour of God with concerns about nourishment. I have received only 2 guilders from the lady-abbess for the whole winter, so I have given one of them to the boy, and I owe the other one, and more, for debts. The boy is loyal to me.<sup>2</sup>

Written from the misery of my exile, on St Joseph's Day in the year of Christ 1523.

Thomas Müntzer, a willing messenger of God.

*(Translated by Andy Drummond,  
March 2016)*

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<sup>1</sup> From December 1522 until March 1523, Müntzer found employment at a nunnery just outside Halle (Glauchau). Despite the existence of a strong and militant local reform movement in Halle; his one attempt to break the rules, by delivering the communion 'in both kinds' to a noblewoman named Felicitas von Selmenitz probably led directly to his dismissal in early March. This letter was written shortly after that, place unknown. Some scholars suggest it was never actually sent to the intended recipients; however, at least one citizen of Halle (Engelhard Mohr, verger at St Georg's church) wrote to TM in late March, asking for more clarification about the Eucharist,

<sup>2</sup> The identity of this 'boy' is unknown.