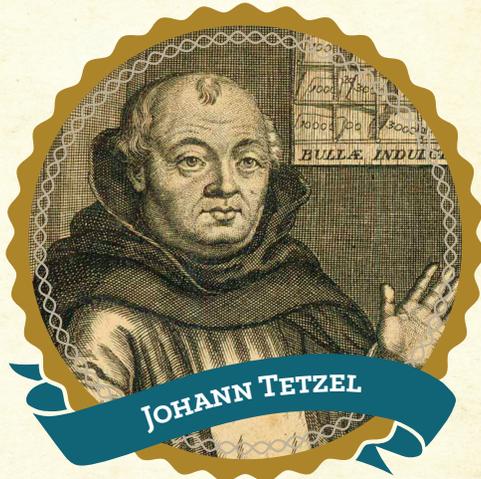


A Dominican monk hired by church authorities to sell indulgences in Germany



JOHANN TETZEL

Born: 1465 | Saxony, Germany

Died: Aug. 11, 1519 | Leipzig, Germany

IT'S A COMPLICATED STORY OF MONEY AND POWER, AND JOHANN TETZEL PLAYED A BIG PART. Tetzel was a Dominican monk who specialized in preaching indulgences. Indulgences were pardons from the penalties of sin imparted by the Church. They originated as an inducement for men to fight in the Crusades. The business of selling indulgences expanded to raise money for other good purposes like building churches. Unscrupulous churchmen also used them to buy church offices.

Enter Albrecht, brother to the elector of Brandenburg. Although Albrecht was the archbishop of Magdeburg, he coveted the archbishopric of Mainz. But this appointment cost money, especially since the pope was building a new St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The two churchmen made a deal: Tetzel would go into Albrecht's territories and raise funds through the sale of indulgences to meet both of these needs.

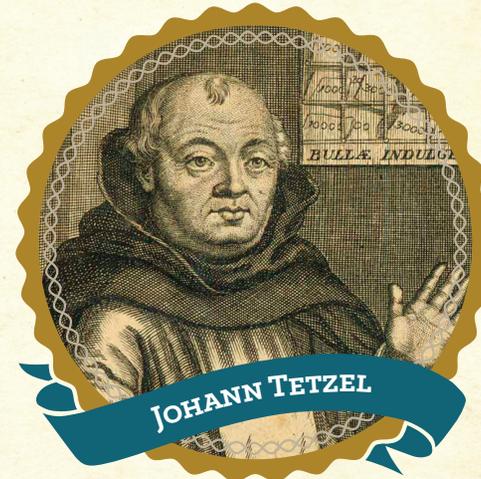
Tetzel may have started as the target of Luther's ire, but soon a clearer picture emerged wherein Tetzel was seen as a greasy cog in a corrupt machine.



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