



Tertullian and Montanism: Ancient Sabbath and its implications for Pentecostalism



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The Sabbath is widely observed differently among Christians, including Pentecostals. Different interpretations of the Sabbath cause this difference. According to Pentecostals, it is necessary to trace the history of the ancient Church to find the meaning of the Sabbath. This article explores Tertullian's thoughts on the Sabbath before and after joining Montanism. The research method used in this article is descriptive qualitative with a historical approach. The research results show significant differences in Tertullian's understanding of the Sabbath before and after joining Montanism. Montanism changed Tertullian's view of the Sabbath in the context of respect and the essence of honouring the Sabbath. However, both of Tertullian's understandings have contributed to the Pentecostal understanding of the Sabbath. Pentecostals understand the Sabbath as a relationship with Christ that leads to eternity because it has eschatological meaning. Towards eternity, it must be maintained while still in the world. Honouring the Sabbath changed from the seventh day to the eighth day because it aims to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus.

Intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary implications: The Sabbath is a time of rest and joy associated with Jesus's Resurrection. The concept of the Sabbath originates from Tertullian's thoughts before and after joining Montanism, which provides a broad dimension to the theme of the Sabbath in Creation theology. This research has implications for studying the history of Christianity and the concept of the Sabbath in the Pentecostal Church in Indonesia.

Keywords: Montanism; Pentecostal; Sabbath; Tertullian.

Introduction

In the Christian tradition, especially in the Western Church, creation is generally presented as simply creating the heavens and the earth in 6 days. Many people focus only on the completion of creation on the sixth day and ignore the importance of the Sabbath on the seventh day. The narrative of the seventh day should be essential and should be the centre of the creation narrative (Brattston 2012:22). The neglect of the Sabbath in the creation narrative is because of anthropocentricity and the Sabbath as an unimportant part. Yonky Karman also rejects the anthropocentric view that makes the sixth day the climax of creation and forgets the Sabbath (Karman 2021:245). The Sabbath is essential to human life because God has distinguished it from other days. However, there are different views and applications. Some Christians take the Sabbath literally. According to this view, those who fail to keep the Sabbath commandments will receive eternal punishment. This group comprises Adventists who base their teachings on Torah law (Ministerial Association and General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists 1988:263). The other extreme states that the Sabbath is no longer relevant to this era because the grace of Christ has cancelled the demands of the law. This group is called Antinomianism (Willem 2006:23). However, other Christian groups, including Pentecostals, observe the Sabbath implicitly. Different applications of the Sabbath are because of different meanings and interpretations.

The Sabbath is a day consecrated (set apart) for a particular purpose. The concept of the Sabbath is first found in Exodus 16:21–30 and parallels the 'rest' in the Creation narrative. God identified the seventh day as his day or the day of God, which humankind must remember and honour uniquely. Walter Brueggemann views the Creation narrative in Genesis 1:1–2:4, including the Sabbath, depicting a Theo-drama about God's confrontation against the chaos that occurs in the universe towards calm (rest) as peace from God (Gn 2:1–4a) (Brueggemann 2010:22). The serenity of this Sabbath raises controversy over its meaning as well. Such as understanding the serenity of the Sabbath as a great worship because of the joy of Jesus' Resurrection (Easter). On the seventh day, the celebration pattern changes and does not follow the usual sequence of divine speech, fulfilment, evaluation and conclusion from the first to the sixth day (Ross 1999:102).

In response to the polemic on understanding the Sabbath aforementioned, we aim to explore the concept of the ancient Church's Sabbath from Tertullian before and after joining Montanism and its implications for the Pentecostal Churches. We carried out this study because we found an interrelated common thread between the spirituality in Pentecostalism and the spirituality in Montanism. In his book, *Studies in Ecstasy*, Bernard Bresson lists (approximately) 26 Pentecostal movements since their inception in Jerusalem to the classic Pentecostal movements of 1906. Bresson gives this list because it traces the same spirituality and theology as classical Pentecostalism (Bresson 1966). One group that is considered to practice Pentecostal spirituality is Montanism. Thomsett (2011:32) directly linked the Montanism movement with Pentecostal spirituality. Jinkwang Kim succinctly states that Montanism is the precursor of Pentecostalism. However, in the historical records of Christianity, Montanism is declared as a heresy. Kim (2009:113) was bold enough on behalf of 'Pentecostal circles' to declare that he accepted Montanism as the precursor to the Pentecostalism movement. Montanism flourished from the 2nd to 8th centuries. One of the ancient church fathers who joined this school was Tertullian. Tertullian was an African lawyer who coined the Trinity to understand the relationship between God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as the One Three. Acceptance of Tertullian's doctrine of the Trinity became a space for Pentecostals to extract and revive their thoughts regarding the Sabbath.

In this article, Tertullian's understanding of the Sabbath becomes a principle in constructing the Pentecostal Sabbath concept. This research is complex because Tertullian's views could be more precise. Tertullian underwent several phases of changing his views, which is typical for anyone. In this article, we want to differentiate Tertullian's attitudes and views into two phases: before and after Tertullian was 'influenced' by Montanism to provide a comprehensive study of Tertullian's views. He inherited the doctrine of the Trinity and the concept of the Sabbath, which Montanism heavily influenced. Although this article will discuss the concept of the Sabbath before and after Tertullian became a Montanist, there is no confusion in understanding his thoughts (Strand 2016). We argue that Pentecostals understand the Sabbath as a celebration associated with Passover, good works and rest in God. Tertullian's concept of Montanism has more influence on the meaning of the Pentecostals about the Sabbath. We correlate the Sabbath according to Montanism and Tertullian with the Pentecostal Church, especially in Indonesia, because we want to construct a Sabbath theology based on the thoughts of the church fathers, apart from the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT).

The research method used in this article is qualitative with a historical approach. The historical approach is used because researchers want to photograph historical events, problems and their effects in a specific period. We carry out five historical research stages: topic selection, heuristics, data verification, interpretation and historiography. We can construct research objectives through these five stages of

historical research (Wardah 2018). The period that the researcher chooses is the life of Tertullian in the 2nd until 3rd century AD during Tertullian's life. Historical research requires clear boundaries of tempus and locus so that researchers can carry out the process of historical study in an investigative and critical manner (Bultmann 2019). The locus in this study is the concept of the Sabbath from Tertullian's perspective. The construction of his thoughts comes from his works and treatises in the form of apologetics, hortatory and writings that discuss certain polemics. Tertullian mentions the Sabbath in his various treatises covering about two decades from AD 197 to AD 218. The historical approach is capable of influencing present and future history. Lonergan (2017:24) emphasised that historical research systematically reveals the history of a theology or church school and has implications for the present (contemporary) and future. Using a historical research design has particular relevance for contemporary social and cultural issues as it enhances understanding of the present. Every contemporary issue is intrinsically tied to the social and historical environment of the past, including the Pentecostal understanding of the Sabbath.

Tertullian's understanding of the Sabbath before the entry to Montanism

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus or Tertullian, as he was affectionately called (155–230 AD), was a church leader and author of many writings during the early days of Christianity. He studied literature, law, rhetoric and philosophy in Rome. He was also famous as a lawyer in Rome because of his intelligence, which surpassed those of his time (Campenhausen 1964:5). In the history of his thought, respect for the Sabbath is shown by encouraging Christians, in his time, to respect the Sabbath (Williams 1996).

The most significant Sabbath statements are found in the five works that Tertullian produced from AD 197 to 202 before adopting the concept of Montanism. The five books are: Answer to the Jews [*Adversus Judaeos*] (197), On Idolatry [*De Idololatria*],¹ Apology [*Apologeticus pro-Christianis*], To the Heathen [*De execrandis gentium diis*] and On Prayer [*De Oratione*]. His work's most detailed treatment of the Sabbath appears in the first part, chapters two through six. This section directly describes the 'primitive law'.² Moreover, 'the law of Moses written on the tablets of stone' concerning circumcision and the observance of the Sabbath. According to him, God has the power to change the rules according to the conditions of the times for the sake of human salvation. Furthermore, Tertullian asserts that if circumcision purified Adam, why

1. Hingga saat ini risalah On Idolatry masih mengalami perdebatan tentang waktu penulisan. Frank Leslie Cross memberikan penanggalan terhadap lima risalah awal Tertullian sebagai berikut: *De execrandis gentium diis* in A.D. 197; *De Oratione* between 198 and 204; *Adversus Judaeos* between 200 and 206; and *De Idololatria* perhaps c. 212 (Cross 1960:137, 138, 143–145). Tetapi, kami memilih penanggalan dari E. J. Goodspeed yang memberikan penanggalan sebagai berikut: *De execrandis gentium diis* and *Apologeticus pro Christianis* (AD 197); *A Adversus Judaeos*, *De Oratione*, and *De Idololatria* between AD 198 and 202. F.L (Goodspeed 1960:160, 163).

2. Tertullian used this term to refer to God's law before Moses.

did he not circumcise him, even after sin? Likewise, keeping the Sabbath day, why did not God strictly command Adam? God designates uncircumcised people who do not keep the Sabbath as residents of Heaven (Tertullian 1889:153). Therefore, because God created Adam uncircumcised and did not keep the Sabbath day, consequently his seed also, Abel, offering sacrifices to him, being uncircumcised and not keeping the Sabbath day, was commended by him. At the same time, he accepted what he offered humbly and rejected the sacrifice of his brother Cain, who did not rightly share what he offered (Tertullian 1889:153). Tertullian wanted to fight against Judaism's view that circumcision and the Sabbath were too crucial for salvation. Even so, he still believes in and performs the Sabbath as an essential worship that Christians must carry out.

Tertullian's early views on the Sabbath were very negative. This is understood in the context of his conflict or polemic with the Jews. Therefore, Tertullian's study of the Sabbath is in his work entitled *Against the Jews [Adversus Iudaeos]*. The Sabbath referred to in this work refers to the seventh day of the Sabbath. In his writings, Tertullian stated rhetorically (Dunn 2004):

For the Jews, from the beginning, God sanctified the seventh day by resting on it from all the works that [God] made, and this was the reason Moses also said to the people, 'Remember to sanctify the sabbath day. You shall not do any servile work on it except so far as life is concerned'. From this, we understand that we ought to observe a sabbath of all servile work on every seventh day and all the time. Because of this, we ought to ask which Sabbath God wishes us to keep, for the Scriptures describe an eternal and temporal sabbath (AJ 4.1–2) (p. 52).

Christians must practice the Sabbath in two ways, namely the eternal Sabbath and the temporary Sabbath. The temporary Sabbath is performed by resting 1 day a week, while the eternal Sabbath is carried out when Christians enter the kingdom of Heaven in the future. Nonetheless, the eternal Sabbath retains practical value in today's world by continuing to work for someone's liberation from slavery or justice (Schaff 2006). The eternal Sabbath argument is built on the reading of Isaiah 58:13–14, which emphasises that the Israelites respect the Sabbath day to experience blessings and maintenance after returning from exile to Babylon for 70 years. Tertullian used Isaiah 58:13–14 as a prophecy for the restoration of the Sabbath, which was fulfilled in Jesus (Tertullian 1885a:155). Jesus is seen as the one who restored the eternal Sabbath by drawing all nations to come and worship in Jerusalem (Tertullian 1889).

The oracle delivered by the prophet Isaiah will direct the observance of the Sabbath day. Isaiah 58:13–14 mentions the Sabbath five times, namely 'the Sabbath' (twice), 'holy day' (twice) and 'that', which refers to the Sabbath (once). Furthermore, three negative clauses serve to define the

'honour' of the Sabbath, namely when the Israelites stopped from (1) doing their 'way', (2) finding or doing their 'fun' and (3) saying the 'word' (Bediako 2020). In verse 13, there is a parallelism of 'pleasure' and 'honour', explaining that honouring the Sabbath means pleasing oneself at God's pleasure. Respecting the Sabbath day, people rejoiced in God. Because the Sabbath belongs to God, honouring the Sabbath is a concrete way to honour or worship God, even into eternity (Bediako 2020:165).

Tertullian massively emphasised the importance of observing the Sabbath on the seventh day. Tertullian rebuked Christians who ignored the Sabbath in favour of following pagan religious holidays and festivals, such as the Saturnalia festival,³ new year, midwinter celebration and Matronalia.⁴ Christians did not even attend Sun, Pentecostals and other Christian services for fear of being recognised by the Romans as followers of Jesus and labelled as infidels (Tertullian 1885b:67). Tertullian condemned Christians who pretended to worship the sun with their lips turned towards the rising sun. This action was tantamount to betraying faith in Jesus by devoting oneself to the God Saturn so that he would be protected from persecution by the Roman government and some Christians even worshipped in order to get ease and luxury (a word used in the writings of the Apology).

Tertullian's book, *on Prayer [De Oratione Liber]*, describes how North Africans kneel when praying on the Sabbath. The kneeling posture is considered a form of humility that must be observed on the Sabbath, but kneeling during the Resurrection and Pentecost services is unnecessary. However, some Christians do not want to kneel because they think it is unnecessary. This action caused such a dispute among the congregation that it had to be taken before a church court to decide the correct posture on the Sabbath. Kneeling should be maintained when praying on the Sabbath. Tertullian himself was displeased with the excessive observance of the Sabbath. He rejected kneeling on Shabbat (Tertullian 1885c:689). From this posture, Tertullian deliberately distinguished the Sabbath from the other holidays. He believes the Sabbath is still respected but does not need serious attention like other major Christian holidays.

What Tertullian wanted to convey explicitly in his polemic with the Jews was their practice of stating that the Sabbath (and also circumcision on the eighth day) must be observed as a means of salvation. Rhetorically, Tertullian actually stated that Adam, Hebel, Noah and Abraham were figures who did not observe the Sabbath and circumcision (JA 2.12–14, 3.1).

3. Saturnalia was an ancient Roman festival and holiday honouring the God Saturn, which was held on December 17 in the Julian calendar and extended to December 23 (Miller 2010).

4. Matronalia was a 'festival of women' dominated by the matron rite to Juno Lucina (wife of the god Jupiter and chief goddess of the Roman pantheon. Juno Lucina was believed to be the goddess of fertility and childbirth, and she had been worshipped since early ancient times in a grove on the Esquiline Hills) in Rome (Dokansky 2011).

Montanism's understanding of the Sabbath and its impact on Tertullian

Montanism is a group initiated by Montanus in the 2nd century AD, which had much influence in the Phrygian area until it entered the Roman area. Montanus massively revived Pentecostal spirituality because, in his view, the spiritual life of Christians had declined, and they did not practice a life related to the Holy Spirit. This group emphasises the Holy Spirit's gifts to prophesy and speak in tongues. Schaff (2017) notes that Montanus had issued, 'After me, there will be no more prophecies, but the end of the world'. From his statement, it is clear that Montanus believed in and practised the gift of prophecy, even though because his prophecy was not fulfilled, he was branded a false prophet based on Deuteronomy 18:20–22. However, some of his contemporaries, such as Maximilla and Priscilla, accepted his teachings and left their husbands to follow Montanus as a prophetess (Kim 2009). Montanus taught that speaking in tongues was far more authoritative than the scriptures and the apostles' teaching. The group practised ecstasy until they fainted as a sign that the Spirit Helper or the Holy Spirit had come and spoken through their mouths. The result of this misplaced emphasis caused the Church to react critically against anyone who would attempt to use the gift of the Holy Spirit at that time. Montanus and his followers are considered martyrs of God because fellow Christians killed them for their actions. However, Eusebius, a harsh critic of Montanus, said that Montanus and his followers hanged themselves under pressure from the Church not to be called martyrs (Eusebius 2016).

Montanus's approach is a response to the dissatisfaction with the Christian life, which has begun to degenerate from the values of the Christian faith, especially concerning the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (Takaliuang 2020:132–156). On the other hand, many Christians were apostatised because of persecution from the Roman Empire. Christian communities in Phrygia and Asia Minor suffered four major persecutions during the 2nd century: under Trajan in AD 112, under Antoninus Pius in AD 155 and under Marcus Aurelius in AD 165 and 185, respectively. North Africa occurred only in 180 AD. It is a common thought that the Montanist movement arose during this first persecution around 156 AD. Therefore, Montanus emphasised that his followers practise the truths taught by the Bible, including regarding the Sabbath, to maintain purity – the Christian faith. Montanus' understanding of the Sabbath is difficult to trace, but in his commentary on Numbers 28:10, John Gill mentions Montanus strictly observing the Sabbath sacrifice. If the Sabbath sacrifice is missed, it cannot be given for the next Sabbath because each has its sacrifice (Gill 2012). From this explanation, it is clear that Montanus greatly respected the Sabbath law.

Montanus' understanding is in line with Rashi's comment, which emphasises that if a person cannot offer a burnt offering on a particular Sabbath, even if that person returns with a burnt offering on the following Sabbath and adds a

second burnt offering, that must be offered on that Sabbath, then the offering is still no longer count (Yitzchaki n.d.). However, several Jewish scribes, such as Ibn Ezra, Rabbeinu Bahya and Avi Ezer, should have emphasised the same substance Montanus conveyed from this verse. Ibn Ezra even emphasises the observance of the Sabbath in this verse without giving direction to a generalisation, as did Montanus (Ibn Ezra 1999). Milgrom (2003) did state that the Sabbath could not be postponed for the following Sabbath; in this case, he agreed with Montanus, but in the larger context of this chapter, he was of the view that chapter 28 was only limited to the sacrifice calendar of the Israelites. He does not emphasise that the Sabbath in chapter 28 is absolute for God's people.

A different perspective is shown by Pekka Pitkänen, who sees this text as nothing more than a rule for Sabbath offerings. For Pitkänen (2015), the material in articles 28–30 is only a distraction because it is not directly related to the overall background of articles 22–36. Bailey also doubts that this chapter is essential because now the Israelites have a bigger goal. This section is believed to have appeared later than the earlier guidelines in Leviticus 23:3. And he believes this chapter was created to demonstrate an orderly time structure providing regular opportunities to refocus priorities, rededicate commitments and reintroduce the biblical story of God and God's people as a means of finding meaning and order amid life's chaos (Bailey 2005). This means there is limited discretion in observing this Sabbath and not as Montanus understood absolutely.

Tertullian joined Montanism in 206 AD and was considered a heretic by the Church. His choice to join Montanism meant he was never recognised as a Roman Catholic saint. Did Tertullian join a schismatic movement such as Montanism and break away from the universal Church? Of course, many observers question this (Rankin 1995:27–28). Did Montanist ideas influence Tertullian? This also becomes a conversation that cannot be continued. However, a conclusion can be drawn from several of Tertullian's treatises, which reveal that he had much in common with Montanism (Dunn 2004:4). How do you historically relate the Montanism movement to the Pentecostalism movement? This has been discussed in Jinkwang Kim's article: *Is Montanism a Hertical Sect or Pentecostal Antecedent?* Jinkwang Kim quite bluntly states that Montanism was a precursor to Pentecostalism; however, in Christian historical records, Montanism is heresy (Kim 2009). Additionally, Youjin Chung's article, *'Looking New at the New Prophecy: Tertullian's Montanism and Pentecostalism as Neo-Montanism,'* offers a novel perspective on transitional correlation. It challenges the conventional portrayal by presenting a revised depiction in concentric circles, wherein Paganism is likened to a caterpillar, Catholicism to a chrysalis, and Montanism to a butterfly. This model suggests a transformative progression from one religious state to another. In this changed perspective, the Montanist schismatic Tertullian became a self-interested mediator of peace between two rival parties: a new prophet and a new priest (Chung 2013).

Tertullian wrote open letters Against Marcion supporting Montanism because of the essential moral teachings of his time, including those regarding the Sabbath. Tertullian joined Montanism mainly because of the Church's practices, which tended to be secular because they followed the rules of the Roman government. He opposed the rigid hierarchies practised by the Church, the bishop who had full power in formulating actions and theology in the Church, who tended to be more secular and paid no attention to the Sabbath day. In the 4th century, Roman Catholics considered themselves heretics (Thomsett 2011:32). Tertullian can be considered a significant figure who made Montanism flourish. His zeal for the purity of the Christian faith adorns his work on the Sabbath.

One of Tertullian's most complex works is *Against Marcion* [*Adversus Marcionem*], written around 208 AD and consists of five books. According to Kenneth A. Strand, the book began during the pre-Montanist period but was completed after he adopted Montanism, particularly the fourth and fifth books (Strand 2016). The topic of the Sabbath was raised not in order to explain the Sabbath 'as it should be' but in the context of his polemic with Marcion – who wanted to subordinate the OT under the NT. In Tertullian's view, the Sabbath is a statute that exists in the OT but is respected by Jesus in the records of the NT Gospels. However, rest on the Sabbath was not understood in the same way as the Pharisees (and also Marcion). The polemic between the Pharisees and Jesus did not want to corner Jesus' Sabbath. Christ kept the Sabbath by carrying out the 'work' intended by God, which was misunderstood by the Pharisees and Marcion (Strand 2016). In his book, Tertullian explains the meaning of the Sabbath as doing work that is not performed for 6 days. Tertullian (1885d) stated to Marcion that:

You reproach Him [God] with change and instability in His commandments, such as that He forbade the work to be done on the Sabbath, yet at the siege of Jericho, God commanded the ark to be carried around the walls for eight days; in other words, of course, there is work on the Sabbath. However, you do not consider the law of the Sabbath: it is truly a work of man, not of the divine, which it forbids. It is written, 'Six days you shall work, and do all your work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God; do no work on that day'. What is the job in question? Of course, you know this yourself. In conclusion, on the Sabbath, He takes away the works He did for six days, namely your work; in other words, human work in everyday life. Now, carrying around the ark was not an ordinary everyday task, nor a human task, but a work that is rare and sacred, and, as the direct teachings of God later commanded, divine... (p. 314)

The Sabbath must be observed, but not strictly observed, as the Jews adhere to the prohibition against performing the 39 *melancholy* labour recorded in the Talmud. Therefore, Tertullian used the story of his disciples picking ears of wheat on the Sabbath (Mk 22:23–28) as a principle that must be preserved. According to him, the Sabbath is a day free from

the gloom of life, not from work. To explain the meaning of work that can be performed on the Sabbath, he goes on to write:

So Christ did not completely abrogate the Sabbath: He kept the law...He showed it in a clear light by various kinds of works while carrying out the law that had been given, except the sanctity of the Sabbath, and while He conveyed the meaning of the Sabbath itself, which it had been from the very beginning. Sanctified by the blessing of the Father, a sanctity by His beneficent act. Because He provided to this day the divine safeguards... Because, in like manner, the prophet Elisha brought back to life the son of the Sunem woman who died on the Sabbath. Do you see, oh Pharisee, and you too, oh Marcion, how befitting is the work of good works for the Creator of the Sabbath, to preserve life, not to destroy it; how Christ did not introduce anything new, which did not follow the example, tenderness, mercy, and prediction of the Creator (Tertullian 1885d).

Furthermore, Tertullian uses the example of the destruction of the walls of Jericho. For him, the Sabbath was not violated in the destruction of Jericho because of obedience to God's commandments. The Sabbath must be practised, not with the spirit of legalism, but with love in good deeds to fellow human beings, even something that has life. However, there is a different tone in his fifth book, *Against Marcion*; Tertullian views the Sabbath as unnecessary because the Creator has cancelled it. He used the exclamations of the prophets Isaiah and Amos, who said, 'I [God] hate your feast days, your new moons, your fasts, and your Sabbaths'. Tertullian's reading of Galatians 4:9 confirmed that God had destroyed the Sabbath (Tertullian 1885e:984). Of course, Tertullian's understanding must be seen from the context. The book *Against Marcion* was written to counter Marcion's heresy, which made a drastic difference between the God of the OT and the NT. The God of the OT is considered lower and evil, while the God of the NT is high and all-loving. Therefore, he tried to show the relationship between the old and new agreements, intending that Marcion would be reasonable with the old agreement. The NT only partially destroys the OT. Instead, there is harmony. A way of faith and grace was prophesied in the OT and preserved in the NT. In the context of the Sabbath, the NT continues to practice it in the form of good works that God commands. What Tertullian was against was the ceremonial Sabbath that God despised in the OT. He still paid the highest respect to the Sabbath, even saying Jesus did not break the Sabbath; he obeyed the law.

Tertullian emphasised that the Sabbath was observed on Sunday because it was related to the Deity of Jesus. The Sabbath is no longer a remembrance of creation but of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead (Schaff 2006). We agree that the Sabbath is associated with Easter and is observed every week. Thus, respect for Easter (as well as the Sabbath) is high. Andar Ismail pointed out that Easter is often neglected because it is not recorded in the calendar. However, that

does not matter because Easter is not only celebrated on the week of Jesus' Resurrection, but every Sunday is Easter (Ismail 2006).

Finding traces of the Sabbath practice in Tertullian's time is difficult. As stated before, it is an interpretation of Tertullian's writings to get an overview of the concept and practice of the Sabbath at that time. Nevertheless, his book *On Fasting [de Jejuniiis]* was written around 217 AD or 218 AD when he was old. He rebuked the Roman Catholic church's practice of remaining at work (Tertullian uses the illustration of "continuing on the journey in rest") during the Sabbath and rarely fasting (except during the Easter season). After he converted to Montanism, the emphasis on fasting and kneeling Prayer was very strong. He rejected the dispensation that Jesus taught (Tertullian 2010). Indeed, Montanism provided a more strict version of Christian views than Catholic Christianity. Tertullian's acceptance of Montanism led him to a more strict interpretation of practices relating to the seventh-day Sabbath.

Implications of the Sabbath for Pentecostals

In general, seven points can be learned from Tertullian's concept of the Sabbath before and after converting to Montanism, namely:

Firstly, the importance of the Holy Spirit. Montanism emphasised the importance of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including prophecy and speaking in tongues, which are also highly emphasised in the Pentecostal Church. This reminds Pentecostal churches of the importance of openness to the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit in the congregation's life.

Secondly, loyalty to biblical teachings. Tertullian and Montanism demonstrated strong fidelity to the teachings of the Bible, including regarding the Sabbath. This invites Pentecostal churches to continue to adhere to the Bible as a source of religious teachings and practices, including respecting the principles of the Sabbath in the form of service and blessed rest.

Thirdly, caution towards church traditions. Tertullian questioned church practices that aligned with Roman rule and challenged the rigid church hierarchy. This leads Pentecostal churches to critically evaluate church traditions and structures, ensuring that they do not hinder the work of the Holy Spirit and remain faithful to core Christian teachings.

Fourthly, the importance of an authentic spiritual life. Montanism's critique of the declining Christian life reminded the Pentecostal Church of the importance of an authentic and passionate spiritual life. This is a call to maintain spiritual vitality and not rely solely on rituals or church activities as markers of faith.

Fifthly, attitudes towards persecution. Montanism arose in a context of persecution, and Tertullian himself faced repression

for his beliefs. This reminds the Pentecostal Church of the importance of endurance and faithfulness in facing trials and persecution because of faith.

Sixthly, the Sabbath is a symbol of freedom and service. Tertullian saw the Sabbath as a rule regarding a rest day, symbolising freedom and an opportunity to do good. Pentecostal churches can take inspiration from this to view every worship and service opportunity as part of a more significant 'spiritual Sabbath', which celebrates deliverance and God's work in their lives.

Seventhly, rejection of legalism. Tertullian opposed the Jewish legalistic view of the Sabbath and emphasised that the Sabbath should be practised with a spirit of love and service. Pentecostal churches can learn from this to avoid legalism and place more emphasis on the spiritual essence of worship and religious activities. The purpose of giving the Sabbath is for Christians to rest with God. However, its application is not the same as 39 *melancholy* practised by the Jews. Rest has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and he is the Sabbath itself. This is God's great work for the life of Christians. According to Heidelberg's confession of the 38th week, Christians stopped doing evil deeds and accepted that God works in the hearts of Christians through his spirit so that they enter into the eternal Sabbath (Rv 7:15) (Den End 2001). Overall, the narrative about Tertullian and Montanism invites the Pentecostal Church to reflect again on the importance of a dynamic spiritual life, being loyal to the teachings of the Bible, and having a critical attitude towards church traditions that can deviate from the essence of the Christian faith. It also reminds us of the importance of appreciating the work of the Holy Spirit in ministry and congregational life.

For Pentecostals, keeping the Sabbath day holy is a time to get to know God better (Rowley 2015). The Sabbath is filled with a relationship with God. God as Creator is the primary reference for the creation of the Sabbath. God initiated, carried it out, sanctified and blessed the Sabbath day (Gn 2:1-3). There is no indication that God is tired or wants to show anthropomorphism, but rather that he wants to provide an example for humans in living their lives. Therefore, in interpreting Exodus 31:17, the phrase 'breathing again' [ašwayinnāp šābat, שָׁבַת וַיִּנְּפֹשׁ] does not mean that God was exhausted. Instead, it means that He rested and was refreshed on the 7th day. This freshness is not only in the world but also in God's eternal rest, which brings to the state of God's kingdom in the world full of love, goodness, truth, peace and justice. Karman has mentioned Tertullian a little in his discussion of the Sabbath, emphasising his view of Sunday as the Lord's Day (Karman 2021:265).

Richard H. Lowery, in his book *Sabbath and Jubilees*, includes God's perfect reign over creation as part of his rest (Dt 3:20; Jos 1:13-15; 23:1). According to Lowery, carrying out orders is a person's decision to ensure their safety. Therefore, when the Sabbath is associated with commandments, it brings about a state of security characterized by political stability,

order in the socio-economic-political world, and the well-being of humanity, among other benefits (Lowery 2000). Sabbath is a commandment that brings security, showing that Sabbath is God's Shalom for the entire universe. The eschatological spirit is also evident from the Pentecostal Sabbath. The seventh day has a beginning in time but an 'opening' (without end) into eternity. In this sense, the Sabbath speaks of the relationship between God and his creation. Pentecostals use an allegorical interpretation to connect the seventh day with 'seven', referring to a specific meaning. Groenewald explains that the number seven is prominent in the Bible, such as in Jesus' genealogy in Luke 3:23–38, and likely corresponds to its role in the apocalypse. The number seven has a symbolic meaning. The most acceptable explanation is that 7 equals 3 plus 4, which is the number of the Trinity and the number of the four points of the compass – the whole earth or humankind. Thus, 3 plus 4 refers to God's intervention in his relationship with humans (Groenewald 1989:51). This style of interpretation is very much in demand by Pentecostals. However, it should be noted that Groenewald is not implying that the doctrine of the Trinity was clearly understood in the OT or even by Luke in writing the genealogy of Christ with his prominence on the number seven. Seven denotes the strong connection between God and his creation in the apocalypse. The importance of the seven is, of course, seen in terms of the seventh day and the fact that God blessed this day and declared it holy. Since then, the number seven has played an essential role in the Bible, as seen in many examples and situations. The importance of this number, as far as the Sabbath is concerned, is that it also communicates something about the relationship between God and his creation and, therefore, corresponds to the purpose of creation. Creation should be realised by the eternal God, who finally returns to the eternity of God and his kingdom so that God can be glorified and become everything (1 Cor 15:28).

Apart from the praxis and concept of the Sabbath, Pentecostals must also have a Sabbath covenant. Exodus 31:14–17 is an eternal covenant between God and his people to keep the Sabbath holy. The Israelites were required to observe the Sabbath from generation to generation as an everlasting covenant [*berit olām*]. By observing the Sabbath, the nation of Israel must truly identify with peace and tranquility as God's purpose, not only for humankind but also for all creation (Rom 8:9–23). Joy must radiate because the Sabbath celebrates the covenant between God and the Pentecostal people (Möller 2019). This concept aligns with the Sunday worship celebrations that Tertullian emphasised after his conversion to Montanism. The Sabbath is of splendour and joy as it celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Brattston warns about this: One thing is sure and was uncontroversial: the primary day of the week for early Christians to gather and worship was not the seventh-day Sabbath, but Sunday, which they sometimes called 'the first day' or 'the eighth day' or 'the Lord's Day'. We have inklings of this in apostolic times: (1) in Acts 20.7, Christians celebrated Holy Communion and listened to a sermon 'upon the first day of the week' and (2)

in 1 Corinthians 16.2, they are exhorted to donate to the church 'upon the first day of the week'. In opposition to Sabbath-keeping, the Letter of Barnabas 15.9, sometime between AD 70 and 132, records Christians that 'we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead. We agree with the concept of an eternal Sabbath because Isaiah 58:13–14 has an eschatological meaning: when God creates a new heaven and earth, God will be worshiped on the Sabbath (Isa 66:23).

Jesus' Incarnation to his Resurrection restored the Sabbath message. In Christ, God and humankind can connect as eternal God and man. Only in Christ, who became flesh, died, and was raised from the dead, can believers receive eternal life again. Only in Christ can God's Sabbath be fulfilled. He is the Creator of the Sabbath that connected Adam and Eve before their fall into sin. As the promised Messiah, he is the Sabbath covenant given to humankind in the OT that brings hope in realising salvation.

Conclusion

Tertullian's concept of the Sabbath before and after joining Montanism impacted Pentecostals. Tertullian helped to provide the basis for Pentecostal Sabbath spirituality and theology. The Sabbath is not only a day of rest but is connected to the day of Christ's Resurrection, so the Sabbath is not only the seventh day but the eighth day. The Sabbath commandment was not cancelled; instead, it replaced the work prohibition by doing work in the form of good deeds, such as seeking justice, peace and harmony. The Sabbath brings two dimensions to Pentecostals. First is the vertical dimension because it celebrates the covenant between God and man, leading to eternal salvation (eschatological meaning). The second is the horizontal dimension because you must maintain relationships with other believers, family and others. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, which does not cancel but gives a new meaning for Pentecostal people to do. He was resting on the Sabbath and will be resting in eternity.

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