

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KUMASI

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

A STUDY OF MALACHI 3:8-12 IN RELATION TO TITHING IN ACTION

CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL, POSSIBILITY CATHEDRAL IN KUMASI

PROJECT WORK

(LONG ESSAY)

BENEDICT BEDIAKO JNR.

FRANCIS OPOKU

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2023

**A STUDY OF MALACHI 3:8-12 IN RELATION TO TITHING IN ACTION
CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL, POSSIBILITY CATHEDRAL IN KUMASI**

BY

BENEDICT BEDIAKO JNR. - 13020510

FRANCIS OPOKU - 13033721

**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY
WITH ADMINISTRATION**

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2023

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project work report is the result of our own original research except for sections of which references have been duly made and to the best of our knowledge no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

Sign:

Benedict Bediako Jnr.
(Student)

Date:

Sign:

Francis Opoku
(Student)

Date:

Sign:

Prof. Yaw Adu Gyamfi
(Supervisor)

Date:

Sign:

Dr. S.B. Adubofuor
(Head of Department Theology)

Date:

DEDICATION

To the glory of God, this work is dedicated to our parents, to the Head of Department Theology Dr. Samuel Brefo Adubofour and also to our supervisor Prof. Yaw Adu Gyamfi for his wonderful support during this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, we will like to express our profound and sincere gratitude to the Almighty God, for his support, direction, insight, understanding, protection and knowledge given to me throughout the duration of our course at the Christian Service University College. Many graces go to our supervisor, Prof. Yaw Adu Gyamfi for his support and constructive criticism and suggestions in this work and to all the lecturers of Theology Department of Christian Service University College especially Rev. Emmanuel Twumasi Ankrah (Rabbi) and Rev. Paul Diboro Kang-Ewala. Secondly, we also express our heartfelt appreciation to Bishop Charles Gyaabin (Head Pastor Action Chapel International Possibility Cathedral, Odeneho Kwadaso), the Theology Department of Christian Service University College and wish to express a profound gratitude to all who prayed and supported us in any other way. We are not forgetting Mother's Business Centre for the printing of this project work and all our course mates. May the good Lord replenish you a billion-fold whatever you have lost because of us. God richly bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	i
DEDICATION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	iv
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
1.1 Background to the Study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
1.3 Research Questions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.4 Aim and Objectives	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.4.1 <i>Main Aim</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
1.6 Research Methodology	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
1.6.1 <i>Methods of Data Collection</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
1.6.2 <i>Sampling</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
1.6.3 <i>Data Analysis</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
1.7 Literature Review	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
1.7.1 <i>Various Definitions of Tithing from Scholars</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
1.7.2 <i>Forms of Tithing</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
1.7.3 <i>How Scholars see the Text and what they are Saying</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
1.7.4 <i>Legitimacy of Tithing to Contemporary Worshipper</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
1.8 Significance of the Study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
1.9 Chapter Organization	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10

CHAPTER TWO: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ACTION CHAPEL AND ITS BRANCH, POSSIBILITY CATHEDRAL AT ODENEHO KWADASO	...	11
2.1 Introduction	...	11
2.2 Inception of Action Chapel International	...	11
2.3 Action Chapel in Kumasi	...	12
2.4 Inception of Possibility Cathedral	...	13
2.5 Tithing in Possibility Cathedral...	...	13
2.6 Conclusion	...	14
CHAPTER THREE: EXEGESIS OF THE MALACHI 3: 8-12	...	15
3.1 Introduction	...	15
3.2 Background of the Book of Malachi	...	15
3.2.1 <i>Date</i>	...	16
3.2.2 <i>Canonicity</i>	...	17
3.2.3 <i>Message</i>	...	17
3.3 Hebrew Text of Malachi 3:8-12	...	18
3.3.1 <i>English Transliteration of the Verses by English Standard Version...</i>		18
3.4 Detailed Exegesis of the Text	...	18
3.4.1 <i>Verse 8</i>	...	18
3.4.2 <i>Verse 9</i>	...	19
3.4.3 <i>Verse 10</i>	...	20
3.4.4 <i>Verse 11</i>	...	20
3.4.5 <i>Verse 12</i>	...	21
3.5 Views of Scholars on the Verses	...	21
3.5.1 <i>Thomas Aquinas</i>	...	21
3.5.2 <i>Martin Luther</i>	...	21

3.5.3 <i>John Calvin</i> ...	22
3.6 Conclusion ...	22
CHAPTER FOUR: ASSESSMENT OF MALACHI 3:8-12 AND ITS IMPLICATION AT POSSIBILTY CATHEDRAL ...	23
4.1 Introduction ...	23
4.2 The Necessity of Paying Tithe ...	23
4.2.1 <i>Types of Tithes</i> ...	24
4.3 Reasons for not Paying Tithe ...	27
4.3.1 <i>Additional Responsibilities</i> ...	27
4.4 Essence of Paying Tithe ...	28
4.4.1 <i>In Handling the Day to Day Activities and Projects of the Church...</i>	28
4.5 The Perception that the believer should have in Tithing ...	29
4.6 Conclusion ...	29
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ...	30
5.1 Summary ...	30
5.2 Conclusion ...	30
5.3 Recommendations ...	31
BIBLIOGRAPHY ...	32
APPENDIX I ...	34

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Tithing in the twenty-first century seems to be a significant yet a highly debatable subject matter in the Christendom. There are opinions from those who consider it something of the past, and others who believe it to be relevant to the modern-day Christian.

1.1 Background to the Study

Much has been said and written about the biblical approaches to tithes, offerings and other forms of giving to God's work. The teaching of tithing is the most predominant in the Christendom and Malachi 3:8-12 the most popular text applied.¹ When tithes and offerings decline in the local congregations in most Christian churches today, the church leaders will preach on the text to motivate the people to give. The resultant effect maybe that, people "tithe because they do not want to be cursed with a curse but desire God's blessing on their life". Instead of giving as an expression of their love for God, they are afraid their needs will not be met if they quit tithing.²

Tithing is the giving of ten percent (10%) on income; which was an integral part Old Testament system of worship where income was always produced in the form livestock.³ Tithing began even before the institution of the Mosaic Law. The very first act of giving as far as tithing is concern occurred in Gen. 14:17-20. When Abram returned from defeating the kings of the north he was met by Melchizedek, king of

¹ Jo-Anne Iris van der Merwe, "An exegetical and theological study of Malachi 3:8-12 and its implications for Christians, with particular reference to tithing" (MPhil diss, South African Theological Seminary, 2010), 1.

² Eliot Lugo-Hernandez, "is tithing for the New Testament Church?" (PhD diss, Southwestern Assemblies of God University of Texas, 2013), 3.

³ Leviticus 27:30 KJV.

Salem, priest of Most High God, to whom he gave “a tenth of everything he had.”⁴ MacArthur notes that in Genesis the Hebrew word translated "tithe" did not refer to a required offering, a divine commandment, nor an ordinance, but referred to a voluntary offering.⁵

In light of the New Testament, is a demand that everyone gives ten percent seemed to be inconsistent with the Christian life of freedom and grace, when one is found under the “law of Christ”. The central question became whether there was a better, and a more biblically sound way to educate Christians about giving. Is the most popular text on tithing, Malachi 3:8-12, relevant to the subject of Christian giving? Is tithing a directive from the Lord that is still in effect and applicable to believers today?

This study therefore focuses on tithing in Action Chapel international, possibility Cathedral. The aim of the study is to investigate Mal. 3:8-12 with a view to appraising its influence on attitudes to tithing Action Chapel international, possibility Cathedral in Kumasi.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Tithing seems to be the predominant teaching on giving in many Christian denominations in Ghana. Church members are encouraged to fulfill their responsibilities by giving God tithe in order to avoid consequences associated with the failing to do so. The book of Malachi 3, precisely 8th to the 12th verse is the most popular text used as the substratum. Even though it is the predominant teaching so far as tithing is concerned but the controversy to be addressed is that some people are of

⁴ Reuben David Van Rensburg, “Tithes and Offerings in the South African Context: The Bible and Reality” (Doc diss, University of Zululand, 2002), 19.

⁵ Rensburg, “Tithes and Offerings in the South African Context: The Bible and Reality,” 19.

the view that tithing is gone with the Old Testament while some also asserts that it's still relevant.

1.3 Research Questions

Due to how the people in Action Chapel International Possibility Cathedral Kumasi, are contemplating as to whether they should continue to pay tithe, this study will seek to ask the following questions;

- i. What is the historical context and meaning of Malachi 3:8-12?
- ii. What is the meaning of the text?
- iii. Is the church properly applying the text?
- iv. What is the historical background of Action Chapel and its branch Possibility Cathedral in Kumasi?

1.4 Aim and Objectives

1.4.1 Main Aim

- i. To examine the historical context of the text
- ii. To explore the meaning of the text
- iii. To establish whether or not the text is been applied by Action Chapel International Possibility Cathedral.
- iv. To examine the relevance of the practice of tithing to the contemporary church using Action Chapel International Possibility Cathedral as a case study.

1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study

Even though there are several texts in the Bible that bothers on tithing, the study is limited to Malachi 3:8-12 and focuses on its implications in Action Chapel international, possibility Cathedral in Kumasi Ashanti region.

1.6 Research Methodology

Research methodology involves the learning of the various techniques that can be used in the conduct of research and in the conduct of tests, experiments, surveys and critical studies.⁶ The researchers employed the qualitative research method to undertake the study at hand. Qualitative research is a research that addresses objectives through techniques that allow the researcher to provide elaborate interpretation of phenomenon without depending on numbers. Its focus is on discovering the true inner meanings and new insights.⁷ The basic exegetical process will be based on the principles of historical grammatico approach.⁸

The study dealt with the context of the selected passage, its meaning and how it may have been understood and applied at the time. In order to conduct a thorough examination of the main text (Malachi 3:8-12) it is essential to understand the wider context of the passage being studied. In this instance the wider context includes the system of tithing and its history, leading up to the passage under review.⁹

⁶ Sam Goundar, "Research Methodology and Research Method," *Research Gate* no. (March 2012): 9, accessed January 21, 2022, t: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333015026>.

⁷ William G. Zigmund, Barry G. Babbin, John C. Carr, Mitch Griffin, *Business research methods eighth edition* (South-Western: Cen gage learning, 2010), 133.

⁸ Mouton Johann, *How to Succeed in your Masters and Doctoral Studies: A South African Guide and Resource Book* (Hastfiled, Pretoria: Van Schalk, 2001), 167.

⁹ Rensburg, "Tithes and Offerings in the South African Context: The Bible and Reality," 11.

1.6.1 *Methods of Data Collection*

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes.¹⁰ The primary and secondary methods for the collection of information were employed.

1.6.1.1 *Primary Methods*

With the primary instrument for collecting information, the research used interviews. Certain key personalities in the area of study were interviewed to solicit their views on the topic of study, which includes Pastor in-charge, key members of the church and individuals who have discharged themselves creditably well in this relevant field of study.

1.6.1.2 *Secondary Methods*

This study also relied on the secondary approach of data collection in which publications such as books, magazines, journals, brochures and internet sources were thoroughly examined. In order to ascertain the needed information for the study, it was necessary to consult English translations of the Hebrew Bible general commentaries and some historical background commentaries were also consulted. Other resource includes grammatical resources and theological dictionaries.

1.6.2 *Sampling*

The researchers use the purposive sampling technique to pick the respondents the researcher deems appropriate for the interview. Purposive sampling is a kind of technique where the sampling units are chosen on the advice of some experts or by

¹⁰ Sajjad Kabir, "Methods of Data Collection," *Research Gate* 204, no.1 (July 2016): 202.

the intuitive or opinion of the researchers themselves.¹¹ This technique helped the researchers to reach their targeted group such as pastors, missionaries/missionary groups, and lecturers. These individuals were chosen based on their level of knowledge and comprehension of the issue of the study and whose views the researcher consider helpful particularly in the area of missions.

1.6.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to information gathered together that helps in arriving at conclusions. Analysis often involves making meaning out of data collected. For this study, data gathered through interviews, analyzed qualitatively and presently thematically.¹²

1.7 Literature Review

1.7.1 Various Definitions of Tithing from Scholars

The current literature on the subject of tithing shows that there is still disagreement among some scholars as to whether tithing is the mandated form of giving for believers today. One of the main areas of disagreement centers on the problem of how the Old Testament fits into the life of the believer, and into the context of the New Testament revelation. One source, Pink argues that tithing falls under moral and not ceremonial law, and therefore is still binding on the believer. Others, like Alcorn and Kendall, see tithing as being a principle that transcends the Old Testament Law, having been practiced before the Law of Moses, and therefore is a practice that believers should continue to observe.¹³

¹¹ R. Panneerselvan, *Research Method; Learning* (New Delhi: Private Limited, 2004), 201.

¹² Zigmund, Babbitt, Carr & Griffin, *Business Research Methods eighth edition*, 133.

¹³ Merwe, "An exegetical and theological study of Malachi 3:8-12 and its implications for Christians, with particular reference to tithing," 9.

1.7.2 *Forms of Tithing*

There are even some, for example Harry Landsdell, who have attempted to use the pre-Mosaic instances of tithing as part of their rationale for tithing as a universal responsibility. Grubb too, would not be able to find exegetical support for his contention that “today, in this age of grace, certainly Christian giving should never be less than one-tenth, the Old Testament standard.”¹⁴ John Huss' (1373-1415) thoughts on tithing are very similar to, and dependent upon, Wycliff. Huss made his objections to tithing known in his book *de Ecclesia* (On the Church). He believed that tithes were pure alms. Giving had originally been voluntary, then customary, and finally obligatory; the primary purpose of (voluntary) alms was for the support of the ministers and the poor.¹⁵

1.7.3 *How Scholars see the Text and what they are Saying*

Many of those who do not see tithing as mandatory for believers point to New Testament teachings on the broader subject of giving as evidence that the tithing laws have been superseded. These include Tate, Carson and Kelly. In light of the New Testament, the Malachi 3 passage is viewed in the context of its being written to a people still living under obligation to the Mosaic Law, and applying to a particular people at a particular time, not as a universal instruction. Kelly is one of the few sources who deal in some depth with the background and John Avanzini in his book, *Always Abounding: The Way to Prosper in Good Times, Bad Time, Anytime*, discusses giving in general and offers an essential debate on some issues in giving. Among the issues is the issue of tithing in the Church today. Chapter three of the book is under the broad heading: “Today’s Taboo Topic-Tithing.” On this Avanzini

¹⁴ Rensburg, “Tithes and Offerings in the South African Context: The Bible and Reality,” 19.

¹⁵ David S. Schaff, John Huss: *His Life, Teachings and Death After Five Hundred Years* (New York: Scribner, 1915; reprint, Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 19,55;

stresses on the fact that preachers of today who hardly discuss about tithing in the Church. He goes on to give the reasons for the avoidance of discussion on tithing. To this he states, “Many preachers feel tithing is too legalistic, and that it has to do with the Law.” Avanzini uses biblical facts to prove that tithing is not from the Law.¹⁶

In the Gift of Giving, Wayne Watts in answering the question, “does this principle of the tithe apply to the Christian today?” has this to say,

Although the main details of the tithe are contained in the Old Testament, Jesus put His stamp of approval on this practice in the New Testament. “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You gave a tenth of your spices, mint, dill, and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faithfulness. You have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former” (Matthew 23:23).¹⁷

Watts goes on to give clear biblical principles on how Christians should give first to God from their income, how they should worship with their money, storing up riches in heaven, and also giving to those who minister to them and more.

Kantonen said that tithing is a practical and ancient tool for helping people become good stewards of their resources when the dangers of incorrect motives and objectives are clearly identified. However, tithing does lack a New Testament foundation.¹⁸

In Scriptural Teaching on Stewardship, Roy T. Cowles explores and attempts finding answers to the following questions; what does Scripture actually teach concerning tithing? Does God demand 10 percent of our income? Does he claim ownership of

¹⁶ John Avanzi, *Always Abounding: The Way to Prosper in Good Times, Bad Times, Anytime* (USA: KCC, 1985), 30.

¹⁷ Wayne Watts, *The Gift of Giving* (Colorado: Navpress, 1982), 30.

¹⁸ Rimamsikwe Habiba, “A Historical Discourse on Tithing and Seed sowing in some Nigeria Pentecostal Churches” *IOSR Journal of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Vol 18 (Nov.-Dec. 2013): 163.

100 percent? In searching for answers to these and related questions, Cowles systematically examined all that Scripture has to say concerning this subject of tithing. Having handled the doctrine of tithing from the negative standpoint, he goes on to explain what God's plan for the Christian is. He states his position that, "there is not one word in the whole Bible that says that God lays an assessment of one tenth of the individual's income upon him, which debt must be paid or he be accounted a defaulter and robber of God."¹⁹

1.7.4 Legitimacy of Tithing to Contemporary Worshipper

In a preliminary survey of the literature in support of tithing for Christians, I found that there was a lack of depth in dealing with the context and background of the supporting texts. In some cases, the arguments presented primarily comprised of statements with little exegetical or theological support. I believe that one of the major weaknesses of the literature is the lack of exegesis of the passages that are used to support a position, as well as bias in the particular theological approach to the subject.

1.8 Significance of the Study

First of all this study will add to the body knowledge to the academic institution on exegesis on the text under review.

Secondly, the study will educate the church members on the need to properly observe this rite.

Thirdly, the study will enlighten pastors on how the Old Testament ritual be related to the modern Christian today.

¹⁹ Roy T. Cowles, *Scriptural Teachings on Stewardship* (USA: Baker Book House, 1985), 5-25.

Fourthly, academically, the study will aid as a research material and add up knowledge for students who will further their study on the field of tithing.

1.9 Chapter Organization

The first chapter captures the General introduction to the study, under which the research will consider the background of the study, the problem statement, research questions, the aim and objectives of the study, the scope and focus of the research, the research methods used, the literature reviews sourced the significance of the study and the chapter's organization. The chapter two focuses on the background of Action Chapel international and narrowed down to Possibility Cathedral in Kumasi, their geographical location, and their position on tithe paying. The chapter three deals with the context for the text by addressing the background of the book of Malachi including its authorship, the purpose of writing, and translation of the text as well as the exegesis of the text.

Also, the fourth chapter concentrates on how the scripture is interpreted by the people and how the text is understood by them. Finally, the fifth chapter focuses on the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ACTION CHAPEL AND ITS BRANCH, POSSIBILITY CATHEDRAL AT ODENEHO KWADASO.

2.1 Introduction

Having laid the foundational block which is the background of the study, we therefore introduce this chapter which is to consider the historical background of Action Chapel as a whole and how its branch, the Possibility Cathedral commenced.

2.2 Inception of Action Chapel International

In 1978, Nicholas Duncan Williams completed his bible school in Nigeria and returned to Ghana. Upon his return he initially tried working with the church of Pentecost and some churches he knew before traveling to Nigeria but none of them was fruitful which led to Duncan Williams starting a fellowship in his father's residence at the Airport Residential Area in Accra.²⁰ Although Archbishop Benson's ministry was here in Ghana but Duncan Williams started his own fellowship. Idahosa established the Redemption Hour of Faith Ministry at Laterbiorkoshie, Accra with George Ferguson Laing assisting.²¹ According to Emmanuel Kinsley Larbi, Idahosa's Redemption Hour Faith Ministry was the precursor of the Neo-Pentecostal Movement in Ghana. Rev. J.S.B Coker who was with Archbishop Benson Idahosa, paid a visit to Ghana in the late 1979 and held a meeting with Duncan Williams and his newly started fellowship.²² It was after the meeting that The Christian Action Faith ministry was established. In 1979, it became Action Chapel International and it is the first

²⁰ Martin Lindhart, *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in postcolonial Societies* (Brill, 2014), 205.

²¹ Martin Lindhart, *Pentecostalism in Africa*, 205.

²² Interview with. Bishop Charles Gyaabin, Action Chapel International, Possibility Cathedral, Odeneho-Kwadaso, 15th April, 2023.

charismatic church to be established in Ghana and International Central Gospel Church led by Dr Mensah Otobil was also established in 1984.²³

2.3 Action Chapel in Kumasi

Action chapel international came to Kumasi in 1992 under the leadership of Rev. Afriyie from Accra. It commenced with Mr. Amoah Danquah, Adu Kwarteng, Bishop Nyarko and Mrs Josephine Nyarko. In its early stages, a place of fellowship at a permanent place was quite a challenge.²⁴ They started at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology(KNUST) botanical gardens. They moved from KNUST botanical gardens to the Commercial Bank of Ghana building at Adum in Kumasi and from there to the ministers' canteen which is also at Adum. They late moved to a warehouse in Adum then to Baso club, from there to Ohwim and to Bantama. They finally got their own place at Abrepo. There has been a succession of pastors who ministered in their own capacity to the current regional Bishops. After Rev. Afriyie came Rev. Stephen Yeboah to Rev. Boadi then Rev. Peter Aba Bacha and in 2009, Bishop Ofori Attah became the head Pastor and 2016, Bishop Steve Ayisi Lartey also came as the head pastor and currently Bishop Joseph Appiah.²⁵ Currently the action chapel international is operating under a decentralized system with the Prayer Cathedral as the Headquarters in Accra, Ghana.²⁶ Under this system the Ashanti region is categorized under three regions namely region 5, region A, region B and region C in each region is a Bishop and the seat of the bishop is a cathedral with branches under his governance. The Abrepo cathedral has Bechem, Techiman and Sunyani under it. The Cathedral at the Lancaster hotel has Kwamo, Tanoso and

²³ Lindhart, *Pentecostalism in Africa*, 205.

²⁴ Interview with Rev. Frank Ampofo, Resident Pastor, Action Chapel International, Arch Cathedral, Abrepo, 19th April, 2023.

²⁵ Interview with Rev. Ampofo.

²⁶ Interview with Rev. Ampofo.

Bantama under it. And finally, the Possibility Cathedral has Obuasi 1 and Obuasi 2 and Twede under its control.²⁷

2.4 Inception of Possibility Cathedral

The possibility cathedral was started in January 2014, although there was some work done by some others before this date but for the proper setting of the church or branch was in the above year stated. Bishop Charles Gyaabin has been the senior pastor from that time to the present date.²⁸

2.5 Tithing in Possibility Cathedral

The Possibility Cathedral has been through several phases but for the purpose of our study will limit everything to the present state and examine it from the tithing point of view.²⁹ The current membership of the church ranges between 200 to 250. The predominant age group is within the ages to twenty-five and 45. This, we could conclude that it has the membership of the working class. According to the financial department of Possibility cathedral, not more than one hundred of the membership are tithe payers. This indicates that half of the membership are tithe payers and the other half are not tithe payers.³⁰ According to Mr. Amponsah, who is the financial head of the church, some of the members have travelled and others too due to change in jobs and transfers, most of them do not pay tithe anymore. Even with rest of the people not all of them are tithe payers. This shows that half of the membership of the church may either not understand tithe or have a different understanding to tithe.³¹

²⁷ Interview with Rev. Ampofo.

²⁸ Interview with Rev. Ampofo.

²⁹ Interview with Bishop Charles Gyaabin.

³⁰ Interview with Bishop Charles Gyaabin.

³¹ Interview with Mr. O.B. Amponsah, Financial Head, Action Chapel International, Possibility Cathedral, Odeneho-Kwadaso, 15th April, 2023.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter described the formation and structure of Action Chapel. it also dealt with the background of Possibility Cathedral to its present state.

CHAPTER THREE

EXEGESIS OF THE MALACHI 3: 8-12

3.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the background of the book of Malachi in general, the authorship, date, the style, the text and the canonicity of the book of Malachi. Also the Hebrew text of Malachi 3:8-12 will be considered as well as the translation of the text and the transliteration of the text.

3.2 Background of the Book of Malachi

The book of Malachi was written in the postexilic period which was known as the “dark age” by Verhoef. It was the period that the Jewish people were under the Persian rule when Darius was ruling the empire. During this era, the Jews in the diaspora had made the foreign lands their homes and those who were still in the Palestine had embraced the rule and system of the new empire. This affected their relationship with God and they were living as those that never knew God. They now married from foreign nations and had children who did not understand even their own language.³² Verhoef argues that, the war that occurred between the Egyptians and the Persians did a great havoc to the Jews. The war actually coincided with the coming of Ezra and his reforms of the nation. It was several years afterwards that Nehemiah came on the scene and discovered the walls of Jerusalem being further destroyed. He further argues that Nehemiah built the walls and restored everything back to order. The people also willingly responded and begun to do what was expected of them. Nehemiah after twelve years returned to Persia, returned again and discovered the

³² Pieter A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1987), 160.

people had again relinquished their duties and gone back to practices that were abolished when he initially came to the Palestine. It is in this that the prophetic message of Malachi is fulfilled. It is seen clearly that with the exception of the desecration of the Sabbath, Malachi rebuked the people for the abuses that Nehemiah came to see upon his second visit to the Palestine. Verhoef proposes that the prophecy of Malachi should be read against the background of chapter thirteen of the book of Nehemiah. He argues that a better understanding of the prophecies of Malachi is evident in Nehemiah.³³

3.2.1 Date

According to Verhoef, Malachi could neither be living in Palestine during the pre-exilic period nor outside. This clearly point to the fact that he was in the postexilic periods and prophesied in postexilic era.³⁴ He again argues that; the book of Malachi acknowledges the existence of the temple and considers the decline of the people's spiritual life since the people together with the priests have drifted. Kaiser also argues that, the prophecy came after the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah beginning in 520 BC. He opines that some of the statements assumes that the temple worship was restored and it is in the postexilic age that the temple worship was restored. He further argues that the book must be dated after the arrival of Ezra in Judah in 458 BC by reason of Malachi establishing his arguments from the knowledge of the Mosaic Law.³⁵ He buttresses this argument by opining that if Nehemiah was the said governor that Malachi was referring to, he would have named him just as Haggai named

³³ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 161.

³⁴ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 156.

³⁵ Walter C. Kaiser JR. *Malachi, God's Unchanging Love* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1984), 15.

Zerubbabel. This argument considers the book to have been written between 458 BC and 445BC.³⁶

3.2.2 *Canonicity*

There are books of the bible that have been disputed on the basis of them being authoritative or inspired. According to Verhoef, the book of Malachi being canonized cannot be disputed. He further argues that although it is not mentioned in the New Testament but there are quotes from the book that are used in the New Testament. Typical in Romans 9:13 is a quotation from Mal. 1:2, 3. and also Matt. 11:10; Mark 9:11, 12; Luke 1:17 also have the quotation from Mal. 3:23, 24.³⁷

3.2.3 *Message*

According to Verhoef the fundamental message of the book of Malachi contain covenantal concept. He opines that God is the significant figure of the book and the initiator of the covenant and also deals with the people through covenant. The people of Israel were breaking their covenant with God and even Ezra and Nehemiah presented themselves to assist in the renewal of the covenant. The book of Malachi is basically about responding well to the covenant relationship and complying with the stipulations that governs their covenant with God.³⁸ This assumes that covenantal issues were the situation of that era. This gives credence to the fact that the fundamental message of the book is covenant of the people of Israel with God.

³⁶ Kaiser, *Malachi, God's Unchanging*, 16.

³⁷ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 171.

³⁸ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 180 & 183.

3.3 Hebrew text of Malachi 3:8-12

והתרומה: המעשר עניוהקב במה ואמרתם אתי קבעים אתם כי אלהים אדם היקבע

כלו: הגוי קבעים אתם ואתי גארים אתם במארה

אפתח אם-לא צבאות יהנה אמר ב זאת נא גוינוכח בביתי טרר ויהי האוצר אל-בית את-כל-המעשר הביאו

עד-בלי-די: ברכה לכם והריתתי השמים ארבות את לכם

צבאות: יהנה אמר בשדה הגפן לכם שפלוולא-ת האדמה את-פרי לכם ולא-ישחת באכל לכם וגערתי

ס צבאות: יהיה אמר חפץ ארץ אתם פייתתיו פלי-הגוים אתכם ואשרו

3.3.1 English Translation of the Verses by English Standard Version

⁸Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. ⁹You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. ¹¹I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts. ¹²Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts. (ESV)

3.4 Detailed Exegesis of the Text

3.4.1 Verse 8

Moretsi argues that, the people of Israel are charged with robbery according to 8a and the evidence of the robbery is proven in 8b which is their failure to pay tithe and

offerings to Yahweh.³⁹ Also Verhoef began his argument by pointing out the rhetorical question posed by Yahweh. He opines that although the question is rhetoric but the plausible answer will be negative since the idea of robbing God seems unassuming but this is the charge laid against the people of Israel. He further argues the 8b such that, as highly impossible for a man to rob God the people of Israel made it possible. Verhoef opines that, part of the 8b which speaks of the response of the people depicts how unaware the charge of robbery is surprising to the people of Israel.⁴⁰ Kaiser also argues with the main word in the verse 8 which is “qaba”. He argues that it appears only here and the book of proverbs 22:23 which is translated as “to rob defraud or overreach”. He argues that some scholars try to transpose the meaning by changing the Hebrew consonant but he argues that is not very necessary since the better meaning should be that the people had taken what belongs to God and it was straightway “thievery and fraud.”⁴¹

3.4.2 Verse 9

Kaiser argues that the resultant effect of the sins of the people is an implicated curse which affected the productivity of all the land.⁴² It is in this that Verhoef states the seriousness of the curse on the people. He stresses the seriousness of the curse by showing the instruments “with a curse” pointing to the degree of the curse.⁴³ Moretsi also argues that the sins of the people of Israel now has made the Yahweh placed land and the inhabitation thereof under a curse and the curse is rendering all their activities and ruining all expectations.⁴⁴

³⁹ L.H. Moretsi, “An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing” (Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for MTH degree at North West University: Potchefstroom Campus, 2004), 147.

⁴⁰ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 302&303.

⁴¹ Kaiser, *Malachi, Gods Unchanging*, 89.

⁴² Kaiser, *Malachi, Gods Unchanging*, 90.

⁴³ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 305.

⁴⁴ Moretsi, “An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing”, 147.

3.4.3 Verse 10

Verhoef opines that the remedy for the disaster faced by the people is stated in plain terms. He argues that the people must return to God and they returning to God is bringing back all the compulsory contributions to the storehouse. The emphasis here is not only on the restoration of the broken relationship but the repercussions of the curse shall also be dealt with.⁴⁵ Kaiser also argues the 10b that, Yahwey now puts the people of Israel to test that, if they will bring the whole tithe to the storehouse. He throws a challenge to the people to test his capabilities if they oblige. He argues with the meaning of the word “bahan” which means to examine and explain, that the meaning of the word denotes examining to determine the essential qualities in essence of integrity. This shows that Yahweh placed his integrity on the line to prove to the people that his word or promise does not fail. Yahweh’s word here was that I will make sure that you neither lack nor need of a blessing.⁴⁶

3.4.4 Verse 11

Kaiser argues in his book that, the restoration of the relationship between Yahweh and Israel will give God room to halt every form of destruction as far as their land is concerned. He argues that, this promise from Yahweh will deal with the devourer by rebuking the actions of the devourer.⁴⁷ Verhoef also buttresses this point by arguing that this verse actually deals with Yahweh destroying the devourer and preventing their crops from failing. He further explains the meaning of rebuke and argues that it denotes the wrath of God present in judgment. This suggests that it is not only that Yahweh will destroy the devourer but does that with His anger.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Moretsi, “An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing”, 149.

⁴⁶ Kaiser, *Malachi, Gods Unchanging*, 91.

⁴⁷ Kaiser, *Malachi, Gods Unchanging*, 92.

⁴⁸ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 308.

3.4.5 Verse 12

Moretsi opines that, the manifestations of the promise made by Yahweh to the people of Israel, will project them in the limelight as a blessed nation visible to all nations around. He argues that Malachi assures the people of Israel that their return to Yahweh will foster joy and turn their shame into glory. He further argues that this will now make them be revered and honored as a nation of Yahweh.⁴⁹ Verhoef also opines that, the nations that took the people of Israel into exile will now have no choice to recognize the risen nature of the people of Israel in their glory.⁵⁰

3.5 Views of Scholars on the Verses

3.5.1 Thomas Aquinas

Since tithes were unmistakably a kind of government taxation at the time Thomas Aquinas wrote, the tithing system was institutionalized. To demonstrate that tithing is a responsibility, Aquinas uses Malachi 3:10 as evidence. Tithes are required by nature, according to Thomas Aquinas. It makes sense that people who dedicate their lives to ministry would require some form of support. He continues to say, "It is evident that Man's obligation to pay tithes arises partially from natural law and partially from the institution of the Church; who nevertheless... might ordain the payment of some other proportion."⁵¹

3.5.2 Martin Luther

According to Luther, this text condemns sacrilege, he contrasts the devotion that pagans have for "worthless idols" with the growing disdain that Jews and Christians occasionally have for the Almighty God. God didn't say this as if He really cared

⁴⁹ Moretsi, "An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing", 157.

⁵⁰ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, 309.

⁵¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*. Trans. by English Dominican Province. 1920. url: <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/index.html>, Second Part of the Second Part Question 87.

about these things, according to Luther. Instead, He says to reserve the ministry of the Word. Luther continues, "You are stealing from me what is mine because you are poor and blame it on me."⁵²

3.5.3 John Calvin

Although Calvin was not quite in favor of the tithing system being extended to the church, he acknowledged that it provided food for the needy and kept the temple operational. Calvin understood the promises as a pledge by God to protect and provide for his people. Calvin explains how man robs God pretty plainly in his practical application by writing as follows: God then, no doubt, is dispossessed by us of his right, when we are rude to the poor and refuse them aid in their need. Since God treats us more kindly than He does others, so that some of our abundance may go to the poor, we do indeed wrong men in this way and are cruel, but our fault is even more grievous since we are unfaithful stewards.⁵³

3.6 Conclusion

Having dealt with background, date, canonicity and message of the book of Malachi, it is discovered that the book was to address issues of covenantal relationship that existed between the people of Israel and Yahweh. And Israel's neglect of their responsibility to the covenant with Yahweh has a side effect displayed as cursed and the renewal of their part of the covenant will result in blessing.

⁵² Martin Luther, "Lectures On Malachi". In: *Lectures on the Minor Prophets*. Ed. by Hilton C. Oswald. Trans. by Richard J. Dinda. Vol. 18. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), 391–419, 414.

⁵³ 1 John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets: Zechariah and Malachi*. Trans. by John Owen. Vol. 5. (Eerdmans, 1950), 586.

CHAPTER FOUR

ASSESSMENT OF MALACHI 3:8-12 AND ITS IMPLICATION AT POSSIBILITY CATHEDRAL

4.1 Introduction

Considering the exegetical analysis and the scholarly views gathered in the previous chapter, the researchers are presenting an assessment of their findings in this chapter and how it applies to Possibility Cathedral as a church. The necessity of paying tithe shall also be discussed under this chapter whether it is still necessary and should it be compulsory to pay tithe in this dispensation and relate it to Possibility Cathedral. This chapter will also consider the benefit of tithing to the church.

4.2 The Necessity of Paying Tithe

The Malachi text, as recognized as an Old Testament text may have some adjustments in its application to the church of this era. The context of the Old Testament tithe in relation to the book of Malachi may differ from the modern-day church though the principles remain the same. The tithe mentioned in Malachi seems to have a connotation of a compulsory contribution similar to what was paid to the cult of Yahweh and government of the ancient Israel.⁵⁴ This is the reason why according to the verse 6, the neglect of the people is regarded as robbing God. The purpose of the tithe in Malachi's context was a provision for the priestly community and the destitute amongst them. This command depicts the devotion of the people of Israel and their covenant with God.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews & Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament* (Downers Grove, Illinois, Intervarsity Press, 2000), 811.

⁵⁵ Walton, Matthews & Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Old Testament, Commentary*, 811.

4.2.1 Types of Tithes

Abrahamic Tithe

Unlike the Abel narrative, there is little doubt that Gen 14:20 states that Abraham gave an offering of ten percent. Does this offering refer to a pre-law "tithe", Genesis 14 says nothing about a system or pattern of tithing that had become part of Abraham's worship of God. The remainder of the narrative about Abraham does not discuss him tithing. However, it does provide some details that are helpful in considering his actions. When the king of Sodom told Abraham that he could keep all the booty (Gen 14:21), Abraham responded, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, for fear you would say, 'I have made Abram rich'" (Gen 14:22-23). From this it is learned that Abraham had already sworn not to keep any of the booty. Therefore, he gave an offering of ten percent to Melchizedek and the rest he gave away, all as part of vow. Some have argued that Abraham gave the tithe from his possessions and not from the booty. Gen 14:20 says that Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth "of all," but it does not specify if the "of all" refers to the booty or his possessions.⁵⁶

The Levitical Tithing

In the Mosaic law, the Levites stood between Israel and God offering daily sacrifices for sin. Numbers 18:20-28 declares that the Levites will receive the entire tithe for their services of bearing this burden (literally, "bearing their iniquity" in Num 18:23) and for not getting an inheritance of land.⁵⁷ This is an important aspect of the tithe as

⁵⁶ Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: from its beginnings to the Babylonian exile*, trans. and abr. Moshe Greenberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 190.

⁵⁷ E. T. Miles Bennett, "Malachi," in *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman, 1972), 389.

it relates to the Levites and priests: they did not receive it as a wage but as an inheritance. These verses should not be regarded as marking the introduction of this concept into Israelite culture, but as systematizing a common cultural practice. This offering was used for the livelihood of the Levites. While instructions for the Priestly Tithe are given in the following verses, 18:31 turns back to the Levites and instructs them that they may eat the tithes anywhere.⁵⁸

The Priestly Tithe: Numbers 18:25-28

The Priestly Tithe is a sub-tithe the Levites were to receive the tithes from the Israelites and then give tithes to the priests. There were two instructions for the Priestly Tithe. First, the amount was prescribed as one-tenth of all they received as gifts. Secondly, the quality of the offering was to be the best of what they had received. Barker says, "The tithe to the priests by the Levites was not only an offering but was a sacred gift to Yahweh. One can understand the displeasure of God when the tithes were not rendered to whom they were due."⁵⁹

The Charity Tithe: Deuteronomy 14:28-29

Deuteronomy 14:28-29 describes another tithe: The Charity Tithe. This third tithe can be distinguished from the previous two because: (1) it was offered every third year, and (2) it was intended for the Levite, foreigner, orphan, and widow. Furthermore, as De Regt says, (Deut 14:27) marks the end of a paragraph with the use of a nominal clause, thus separating verses 27 and 28.⁶⁰ The previous tithes were to be given either every year or during feasts; this third tithe was to be offered every third year. The Levitical tithe was mostly for the Levites' sustenance; this third tithe was not for the

⁵⁸ Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 433; *Cult and Conscience*, 55-56.

⁵⁹ Milgrom, *Numbers*, *The JPS Torah Commentary Conscience*, 55-56.

⁶⁰ Lenart J. De Regt, "Macrosyntactic Functions of Nominal Clauses Referring to Participants," in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches*, ed. Cynthia L. Miller (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 287.

Levites only. If the Charity Tithe replaced the Levitical Tithe every third year, then how were the Levites sustained that year? Also, if the Charity Tithe replaced the Festival Tithe every third year, did the Israelites just ignore the prescribed feasts.⁶¹

Conclusion on Tithing in the Mosaic Law

The above investigation of references to tithes in the Mosaic Law has yielded the following results. First of all, it appears that the annual tithe of the Israelites surpassed ten percent of their income, actually totaling more than twenty percent. The Levitical Tithe was ten percent of the Israelites' income. The Festival Tithe was another ten percent of a person's income, with both of these tithes totaling twenty percent. Finally, the Charity Tithe averaged three and one-third percent every year. When including the Sabbatical Year in calculations, this adds up to approximately twenty percent of an Israelites' overall income per year in a seven-year cycle in tithes only.⁶² The Mosaic Law never directed the Israelites to give of their increase; it specified particular products that were liable to tithe laws.

Abraham's Tithe and the Mosaic Law

There are a few indicators that suggest that Genesis 14 should not be understood as a reference to tithing consistent with Mosaic Law tithing. First, tithing in the Mosaic Law is a consistent, systematic action. If Abraham was tithing consistently, who received the other tithes? Did Melchizedek engage in an itinerant ministry and collect tithes on behalf of God?⁶³ Verhoef contends that Melchizedek was most likely the king of the town of Salem and functioned as a priest for that town or clan only.⁶⁴ Second, Abraham gave a tenth of what he recovered. (Heb 7:4) refers to Abraham

⁶¹ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*. Pg. 303.

⁶² Milgrom, Numbers, *The JPS Torah Commentary Conscience*, 55-88.

⁶³ Fanie Snyman, "A Theological Appraisal of the Book of Malachi," *Old Testament Essays* 27/2 (2014), 604.

⁶⁴ Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*. Pg. 403.

giving a tenth of "the spoils." Therefore, Scripture never describes Abraham as giving a tenth of his possessions. Third, nothing in the present passage indicates that Abraham continually gave a tenth of his increase.

In summary, Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils to Melchizedek; but the Mosaic Law gives a different computation of what is required in battle victory. The argument that God's people consistently practiced tithing from at least Abel onward has little substance. Abraham's offering is not consistent with the requirements of the Mosaic Law.⁶⁵ For these reasons, the argument that Abraham in Genesis 14 gave to Melchizedek a tithe in accordance with the Mosaic Law is unsubstantiated.

4.3 Reasons for not Paying Tithe

In our interaction with Bishop Charles Gyaabin, showed that, although it is not helpful for church members not to be paying tithe but to make right assessment of the situation, one must consider the factors raised by some members of the church on why paying tithe could be a challenge.⁶⁶

4.3.1 Additional Responsibilities

Moretsi in his thesis opines that one reason why people may not pay tithe is because of several responsibilities that they have to attend to. He argues that the cost of living is on the rise and other activities which demand so much from the people pose a challenge to them. Adding the paying of tithe to it seem to increase the burden of the people.⁶⁷ Walton and his fellows also argue that during the reign of Xerxes, the greater burden of the temple funding was provided by the people without the support

⁶⁵ Fanie Snyman, "A Theological Appraisal of the Book of Malachi, 609.

⁶⁶ Interview with. Bishop Charles Gyaabin.

⁶⁷ L. H. Moretsi, "An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing" (Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for MTH degree at North West University: Potchefstroom Campus), 84.

of the Persian empire hence increasing the financial burden of the people which led to hardship and the rationalization of the people cutting the temple funds. This gives reason that certain factors such as stated above can force the people to cutting down of the tithe.⁶⁸

4.4 Essence of Paying Tithe

4.4.1 In Handling the Day to Day Activities and Projects of the Church

Interaction with the Bishop Charles Gyaabin, revealed that, the current location of Possibility cathedral is a rented place and therefore the Church seeks to acquire a land to have their permanent place of worship. In order for the Church raising money to purchase a land and build on it. So therefore, the payment of tithe together with the offerings has been helping to get their own place, and in this case failure of members to pay tithes could hinder the land acquisition. He further echoed that bills and other utilities that the church has to be settled also are generated from whatever comes as tithe and offerings. In our interview also, Bishop Charles was questioned on the hearsay that some members are of the notion that the tithe is giving the pastors to spend and therefore considers it irrelevant to pay tithe since they consider too much money going to the pastor. With this he said, that with Action Chapel International such activities are not displayed since whatever comes through the coffers of the church is audited by the church audit board and the tithes and offerings are for God although the pastors are paid through it as well. He ended this by saying that this maybe the action of some pastors but a proper functioning church goes through structures which makes this kind of actives improper and condemning.⁶⁹ Moretsi buttressed this view by saying that, the tithes and offerings giving by the people of

⁶⁸ Walton, Matthews & Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament*, 811.

⁶⁹ Interview Bishop Charles Gyaabin.

Israel was also are fund for the temple services. He opined that it was the tithe that was used to run the demands of the temple. So therefore, their giving in the sense of tithe was to handle certain responsibilities of the temple.⁷⁰

4.5 The Perception that the Believer should have in Tithing

In every activity of man, having the right perception helps you to do it right. Moretsi in his thesis also opined that members should recognize themselves as stewards of God. And as stewards of God, they own nothing but rather are care-takers for God. They recognizing whatever they have as God's, will appropriate them in giving back to the work of God as tithe. He argues that Paul considers a steward as one that is working with God. This shows that the believer is work with God on all levels to see to it that the kingdom of God flourishes and it is impossible to achieve this if you cannot be a tither.⁷¹

4.6 Conclusion

There are several factors that in this dispensation can actually hinder one or cut of tithe since the era is demanding but this should not be an excuse as a steward not to pay your tithe but rather consider yourself first as a steward of the kingdom of God and help in growing the kingdom.

⁷⁰ Moretsi, "An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing", 81.

⁷¹ Moretsi, "An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing", 86.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Generally, the study analyzed tithing in relation of the Malachi 3:8-12 in the light Possibility Cathedral in Kumasi. The study attempted to deal with the problems of tithing with the use of the Malachi text. In this the study used textual analysis both inductive and deductive methods. The study considered the historical background of Possibility cathedral and its experience with tithing. Also, an exposition of the Malachi text is done to unveil the actual meaning of the text. The study considered the historical background of the book, the message of the book, the date and the canonicity of the book as well. A further study was done on the Hebrew text and other translations necessary of the study.

5.2 Conclusion

Although, there are several contentions concerning tithing from the Old Testament to the New Testament. There are certain key fundamentals that are essentials and for that matters giving of the tithes become relevant to the modern church. Most of the time, the focus of the text is centered on the tithe but above the tithe itself is the covenantal relationship and the obedience of the people to God. In this covenant, there are roles played by each part and promises are also related from covenant with God and made us stewards of the kingdom of God. The reason for giving tithe seem not to change that much even though priests of the New Testament is not restricted from working but the services in the temple are still relevant and giving to the poor was still stressed by Jesus and the disciples.

5.3 Recommendations

Firstly, when people know what their contributions in the sense of tithe are being used for, it increases their sense of giving. It is recommended for the pastors and the leadership to be teaching the members what the tithes are used for and the benefits they could derive from paying so that they would observe that diligently.

Secondly, it is taught that those who pay tithes faithfully are blessed so it is recommended for member of the church to observe that ritual in order to attract God's blessings.

Thirdly, it can also be deduced that from the study that the tithe are used to support the poor hence, it is recommended for the leadership of the church to encourage their members to do in order for the poor to be well catered for.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica*. Trans. by English Dominican Province. 1920. url: <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/index.html>, Second Part of the Second Part Question 87.
- Avanzi, John. *Always Abounding: The Way to Prosper in Good Times, Bad Times, Anytime*. Tulsa, Oklahoma: KCC, 1985.
- Calvin, John. *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets: Zechariah and Malachi*. Trans. by John Owen. Vol. 5. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1950.
- Cowles, Roy T. *Scriptural Teachings on Stewardship*. Michigan, USA: Baker Book House, 1985.
- Croteau, David A. "Biblical and Theological Analysis of Tithing: Toward A Theology of Giving in The New Covenant Era". Doc of Philosophy, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Wake Forest, North Carolina, 2005.
- Goundar, Sam. "Research Methodology and Research Method," *Research Gate* no. (March 2012): 9, accessed January 21, 2022, t: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333015026>.
- Habiba, Rimamsikwe. "A Historical Discourse on Tithing and Seed sowing in some Nigeria Pentecostal Churches" *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Vol 18 (Nov.- Dec. 2013): 163.
- Johann, Mouton. *How to Succeed in your Masters and Doctoral Studies: A South African Guide and Resource Book* (Hastfiled, Pretoria: Van Schalk, 2001), 167.
- Kaiser JR., Walter C. *Malachi, God's Unchanging Love*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1984.
- Lindhart, Martin. *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in postcolonial Societies*. Brill: Leiden, 2014.
- Lugo-Hernandez, Eliot. "Is tithing for the New Testament Church?" (PhD diss, Southwestern Assemblies of God University of Texas, 2013), 3. Accessed <http://www.academia.edu>.

- Luther, Martin. "Lectures On Malachi". In: *Lectures on the Minor Prophets*. Ed. by Hilton C. Oswald. Trans. by Richard J. Dinda. Vol. 18. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1975.
- Merwe, Jo-Anne Iris van der. "An exegetical and theological study of Malachi 3:8-12 and its implications for Christians, with particular reference to tithing" (MTH 35 diss, South African Theological Seminary, 2010), 1. Accessed <http://sats-ac.za>.
- Moretsi, L. H. "An Exegetical study of Malachi 3:6-12 with special reference to tithing". Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for MTH degree at North West University: Potchefstroom Campus, 2004.
- Panneerselvan, R. *Research Method; Learning* (New Delhi: Private Limited, 2004), 201.
- Rensburg, Reuben David Van. "Tithes and offerings in the South African context: The Bible and Reality" (Doc diss, University of Zululand, 2002), 19. Accessed <http://uzspace.unizulu.ac.za/> Accessed <http://www.academia.edu>.
- Sajjad Kabir, Syed Muhammad. "Methods of Data Collection," *Research Gate* 204, no.1 (July 2016): 202 accessed January 21, 2022, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325846997>.
- Verhoef, Pieter A. *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987.
- Walton, John H., Matthews, Victor H. & Chavalas, Mark W. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary Old Testament*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Watts, Wayne. *The Gift of Giving*. Colorado: Navpress, 1982.

APPENDIX I

PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED

Bishop Charles Gyaabin, Action Chapel International, Possibility Cathedral, Odeneho-Kwadaso, 15th April, 2023.

Mr. O.B. Amponsah, Financial Head, Action Chapel International, Possibility Cathedral, Odeneho-Kwadaso, 15th April, 2023.

Rev. Frank Ampofo, Resident Pastor, Action Chapel International, Arch Cathedral, Abrepo, 19th April, 2023.