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Ethical and theological reflection on Genesis 38:8-10 in light of the withdrawal method of Family Planning

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Abstract

This article examines Genesis 38:8-10, focusing on the motivation for Onan's action and its ethical and theological implications for contemporary discussions on family planning and contraception. It explores the levirate marriage system in ancient Israel, the cultural significance of childbearing, and the moral dimensions of Onan's actions within the context of societal and divine expectations. The article further investigates theological perspectives on contraception, addressing debates on the ethical use of family planning methods, including the withdrawal method, within the framework of biblical teachings. The study utilized exegetical tools to analyze the textual and contextual dimensions of Genesis 38:8-10. A close reading of Genesis 38:8-10, with particular attention to the Hebrew term *shāḥat*, reveals Onan's deliberate violation of familial and communal obligations, leading to divine judgment. Onan's punishment was rooted not only in his act of withdrawal but also in his self-serving intentions and his neglect of his levirate duty, which had adverse effects on Er's lineage, Tamar's inheritance, and her future within Judah's family. Furthermore, Onan's persistent act of withdrawal, without mutual consent, exploited Tamar's vulnerability and femininity. The study highlights the importance of mutual consent, moral responsibility, and stewardship in marital relationships, offering a nuanced understanding of the biblical mandate to "be fruitful and multiply." By integrating historical exegesis with modern ethical considerations, the study provides actionable insights for Christians navigating family planning decisions in light of faith and morality. This analysis contributes to the ongoing discourse on the intersection of theology, ethics, and reproductive health, advocating for informed and compassionate approaches to family planning that honor both biblical principles and contemporary realities.

Keywords: Genesis 38:8-10, Levirate Marriage, Family planning, Withdrawal method, Sexual Exploitation.

Introduction

The subject of ethics has been viewed from different perspectives. Darthy (2023) posits that ethics pertains to the criteria or principles used for the systematic assessment of the morality of human actions. To Bartneck et al. (2021), ethics is the assessment of human actions through the lens of "good" and "evil," or of "morally correct" and "morally wrong. As a discipline, ethics is concerned with what is morally good and bad and morally right and wrong in a society (Nicolaides, 2020). The term is also applied to any system or theory of moral values or principles (https://www.britannica.com/topic/ethics-philosophy). Some of the important aspects of ethics are that it ensures good conduct, promotes a sense of responsibility and accountability, prevents reputational damage and prevents financial loss due to avoidable litigations (Thwala, 2024). Ethics uses ethical theories (principles) as instruments to measure ethical decisions or judgments (Ottuh and Idjakpo, 2022).

M. Daniel Carroll R (cited in Udoekpo 2024) observes that Old Testament ethics is grounded ultimately in the person of Yahweh, the God of Israel, who is declared to be the God of creation and humanity. Yahweh's sovereignty, established through his creative, redemptive and sustaining powers require that he places ethical demands on Israel (Genesis 1:28-30, 2:15-19; Exodus 20; Micah 6:1-8) and humanity, by extension. As it is with most covenantal engagements, there are blessings and consequences for both obedience and disobedience (Deuteronomy 28). This perspective runs throughout the Old Testament and is fundamental in understanding the Genesis 38:1-11 narrative. Evidently, Old Testament ethics are fundamentally rooted in the character and actions of Yahweh, emphasizing justice and righteousness (Exodus 34:6–7; 89:14; Matthew 89:15; Isaiah 33:5; Jeremiah 9:24).

Genesis 38:1-11 records one of the complexed narratives in the Old Testament: the mysterious death of Er (the son of Judah and Hirah) signaling the end of his marriage to Tamar, Onan's refusal to fulfil his levirate duties to Tamar, even at Judah's instruction, and his subsequent death. Beyond Genesis 3:11, verses 12-30 record Tamar's return to her father's house at Judah's instruction due to his fear of losing Shelah, the youngest son. However, after the demise of Hirah, Judah's wife, fate brought Judah and Tamar together in a sexual relationship that resulted to the birth of Perez and Zerah (vs 27-30).

Onan's attitude towards the Israelite levirate marriage law and Tamar in Genesis 38:8-10 constitutes a shift in paradigm which among other things introduces a new perspective to the family planning discourse raising ethical and theological concerns. Harrison (1998) noted that the unnatural sex act in itself in Genesis 38:9-10 is the most gravely sinful aspect of Onan's treatment of Tamar for which God Killed him. He further argued that the author would have stated more discreetly that Onan was killed because, he refused to allow Tamar to conceive, so God slew him for his "hardness of heart," his pride, or perhaps his avarice". Benjamin (2018) argues that the essence of Onan's transgression lies not in the act of masturbation, but rather in the act of deceit. He further contends that Tamar entrusted her land use rights to him in his capacity as her legal guardian; however, he declines to sire an heir for her, thereby obstructing his ability to perpetuate the usufruct of the land.

To Matthewson (1989), Genesis 38:9-10 indicates that Onan declined to fulfill this obligation, aware that the progeny would be regarded as his deceased brother's rather than his own. Consequently, Onan's continual ejaculation on the floor was deemed malevolent by Yahweh, resulting in the forfeiture of his life. Mathewson did well to prove that Onan's sin was the motive behind the repeated spilling of his semen and not the act itself.

Adeloye (2022) contends that Yahweh did not kill Onan for using contraception in his levirate marriage (a custom where a man's brother marries his deceased brother's childless widow to provide for her and ensure the family lineage continues) with Tamar; rather, Onan was killed for misusing contraception to fulfill his selfish interests, which included his desire to inherit his late brother's firstborn estate and an unrestrained urge to satisfy his sexual desires with Tamar. The author contends that had Onan fulfilled his obligation to produce offspring for his brother, as required by levirate marriage, his death likely would not have occurred. Onan exploited the patriarchal family structure to impose significant suffering on Tamar through his repeated contraceptive actions. Ugwuewo and Sopuru (2023) consented to the above view but added that it was not Onan's voluntary consent to engage with Tamar – the reason he initially articulated the significance of the commitment, which he well understood would not benefit him in return.

Ugwuewo and Odo (2025) posit that Genesis 38:8–10 is not against the use of contraceptives and birth control; it is rather the motive behind the use of contraceptives by married couples that determines whether it is ethical or evil. Christian couples are strongly advised to carefully examine the impact of the use of contraceptives to maximise the benefits and avert the precarious side effects. Although using different terms, Matthewson, Ugwuewu and Sopuru, Ugwuewu and Odo, Benjamin and Adeloye support the view that Onan did not die for his use of withdrawal method but because of his evil and selfish intention. This view resonates with our research. Contrary to this opinion, Harris et al. (1981) argue that God killed Onan specifically for using withdrawal method which he called the "the unnatural sex act". He elaborated that the author could have straightforwardly stated that God killed Onan due to his wickedness and hardened heart.

The perspectives on birth control held by adherents of various religious faiths over the past decades and into contemporary times highlight the importance of conducting a balanced analysis of the topic to achieve a deeper understanding. Throughout the years, religious-based organizations, including various Christian denominations, have formulated opposing viewpoints regarding birth control (Ugwuewo & Chukwuka, 2023). Genesis 38: 8-10 stands as a pivotal biblical reference frequently cited in discussions surrounding the topic of birth control.

The advocates against artificial contraception frequently assert that Yahweh condemned Onan for engaging in coitus interruptus, a practice that contemporary reproductive health categorizes as "artificial contraception" (Adeloye, 2022). This issue has raised significant questions about the moral and theological dimensions of contraception, particularly the withdrawal method, and its acceptance within the framework of biblical teachings. Withdrawal (coitus interruptus) method continues to be one of the most prevalent and least studied forms of contraception worldwide (Kulczycki, 2004). This practice has been utilized since biblical times as a form of contraception and remains one of the most common temporary methods globally (Rogow & Horowitz, 1995).

Onan's attitude towards the Israelite levirate marriage law and Tamar in Genesis 38:8-10 introduces a new perspective to the family planning discourse raising ethical and theological concerns. At the heart of these concerns is the language of Genesis 38:9a: "But since Onan knew that the offspring would not be his". Reflecting on the above, Ugwuewo and Chukwuka (2023) submit that Onan had an ulterior motive from the onset. If Onan was aware of the law of levirate marriage, the question remains; why did he decide to spill his semen on the ground? If he did not want to fulfil his levirate duty to his deceased brother and his wife, why did he accept to sleep with Tamar *ab initio*? What exactly attracted God's wrath on Onan?

By examining the cultural and historical context of Genesis 38:8-10, as well as its ethical reflections, this article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivation for and implications of Onan's action in Genesis 38:8-10 in addressing contemporary discussions on family planning and moral responsibility.

Historical and Cultural Context of Genesis 38:8-10

The perspective of the Israelites on levirate marriage, as outlined in Genesis 38:8-11, Deuteronomy 25:5-10, and Ruth 4:1-12, mandated that a man should 'marry' the childless widow of his deceased brother. This practice simultaneously imposed an obligation on the childless widow to remarry within the family of her late husband (Yeung, 2008). Levirate marriage appears to have been extensively observed in the ancient Near East, particularly throughout the 2nd millennium B.C.E. The Hittites, Hurrians, Assyrians, and Canaanites all engaged in and governed a matrimonial tradition akin to the biblical levirate (Legget, 1974; Burrows, 1940). The term Levirate is derived from the Latin word levir, signifying “a husband’s brother.” A levir is, by definition, a man who enters into marriage with his brother's widow in order to ensure the continuation of his brother's lineage (Schwab, 2012).

This arrangement aimed to preserve the deceased’s property within the family unit while ensuring the widow received protection and care through the son raised by proxy, as legal constraints prohibited her from remarrying outside her late husband’s lineage (Sahgal, 2012). Among the ancient Israelites, offspring was the sole means of sustaining one's existence after death. Hence, in the absence of an offspring, the existence of one would be erased in Israel. In order to prevent such a disaster, the levirate law required that the brother or closest male relative of the deceased individual enter into marriage with his widow. This would guarantee that the widow's assets or dowry, along with her reproductive capacity, were preserved within the same patriarchal lineage. This practice facilitated the perpetuation of the deceased individual's lineage and name in Israel, in addition to ensuring the preservation of his property among the family members (Ikenna, 2011).

Immediate Context of Genesis 38:1-11

The opening verse indicates that Judah left his brothers and sought the company of a man from Adullam named Hirah.

The establishment of Judah's family (38.2-5) -- Having formed an alliance with a Canaanite man (Grollenberg, 1957), Judah intensifies the plot by marrying a Canaanite woman. The births of three sons are "recorded in breathless pace," indicating their secondary role in setting the stage for what follows (Alter, 1981).

The tragedy in Judah's family (38.6-7) The narrative now immediately transitions from the delivery of the sons to the marriage of the first son. Tamar, the second primary character, is introduced at this point in the narrative. Tragedy occurred after Judah married Tamar to his son Er. Er's life was taken by Yahweh due to his vile deeds (Freedman, 1947).

Onan and Tamar’s Marriage (38:8-10) - After Er's death, Judah ordered Onan to visit Tamar and perform his duty as a brother-in-law to her with the intention of producing offspring for Er (Mathewson, 1989). A pertinent question that could be addressed is whether the Hebrew term *veyabem* (from *yābam*) translated “and marry her”, “to perform the duty” used to describe the sexual relationship between Onan and Tamar for procreation was also intended to create a marital bond (Adeloye, 2022). Further, Genesis 38:9 opens with a disturbing thought: "But since Onan knew that the offspring would not be his".

Reflecting on the above, Ugwuewo and Chukwuka (2023) submit that Onan had an ulterior motive from the onset. What exactly informed Onan’s actions?

The study now examines the Hebrew yābam and shāḥat to shed light on the above concerns.

yābam "to perform levirate marriage"

The Hebrew *yābam* is rendered "to perform levirate marriage", "perform the duty of a brother-in-law" that is "the duty due to a brother who died childless - to marry his widow and have a son for his name." (NET). A closer look at Deuteronomy 25:5 suggests that the levirate marriage law requires that the brother to the deceased should marry the surviving widow. This idea is evident in the various translations as follows: "take her to him to wife" (KJV), "Go into her and take her to himself as wife" (NAS), "Go in to her, take her as his wife" (NKJ), "take her and marry her" (NIV), and "must go to her, marry her, …" (NET).

Whereas biblical data does not provide evidence(s) of levirate marriages where the *levir* fulfilled his levirate duty and resigned, the above nuances of *yābam* plausibly substantiate the idea of marriage between the *levir* and the widow beyond the birth of a son. Harris et al (1981) further substantiate the foregoing by arguing that only the first offspring (*bekol*) would be reckoned in the deceased's name. It is plausible that the other children born from this union would be regarded as the biological progeny of the levir.

shāḥat "he spilled on the ground"

The Hebrew verb *shāḥat* occurs 165 times in 60 forms in the Old Testament. It appears most often in *hiphil* (96x), and less in *piel* (39x), *nifal* (6x) and *hophal* (2x) (van Gemeren vol 4, 1997). Shāḥat is translated as pit, destruction, corruption, or grave. The LXX translates it with words for "corruption or destruction" eleven times, "death," five times, and "pit" three times in the areas where a verb "dig" is associated (Strong, 7845). Harris et al (1981) submit that of the various nuances of *shāḥat,* it is majorly translated "to destroy" or "corrupt." In fact, there is no significant difference in translation with reference to the various verb stems.

Shāḥat can describe the spoiling and destruction of a large variety of matters, such as the corruption of morals (ni. and hi., Genesis 6:11-12 (par.hms); pi., Deuteronomy 32:5; ni., Ezekiel 20:44), the spoiling or wasting of semen (pi., Genesis 38:9), a ruined spring (ho., Proverbs 25:26), the breakdown of a belt (ni., Jeremiah 13:7), the violating of a covenant (pi., Malachi 2:8), and the destruction of the King (hi., 1 Samuel 26:15), a city (hi., Genesis 18:28) or nations (hi., Jeremiah 4:7) (van Gemeren vol 4, 1997).

In Genesis 38:9, *w^{e}shiḥēt* is verb *piel waw* consecutive 3rd person masculine singular, translated as "he emitted" (NKJ), "he spilled" (NIV, RSV), "he withdrew prematurely" (NET), "he wasted" (NAS) suggests not only the destruction of the semen and termination of the reproduction process, but also implies the termination or 'destruction' of Er's linage and Tamar's loss of family inheritance. The occurrence of *shāḥat* in the *Piel* stem in Genesis 38:9 sheds light on Onan's intention toward Tamar and Er's linage. The Hebrew *Piel* Verb Stem is an intensive stem. Conceivably, Onan's act of spiling his semen was not accidental but rather premeditated to end his brother's linage. This is evident in the fact that he spilled continuously without her consent, each time he went into Tamar. His actions held Tamar hostage, preventing her from accessing someone else to perform the duty of a *levir*, as in the case of Noami and Ruth (Ruth 3).

Ethical and Theological Reflection on Onan's Action

Onan's decision to spill the semen without the consent of Tamar demonstrates cruelty and disregard for God, cultural heritage, and womanhood. By unilaterally denying Tamar her legally protected right to levirate offspring, Onan reinforces a patriarchal structure in which a woman's economic security, social dignity, and reproductive agency are subordinated to male self-interest, thereby magnifying her vulnerability within the household system of ancient Israel. This is

essential because since sustaining his late brother's family linage was obligatory within the ethics of levirate marriage, it was both natural and morally required that he informed his father and Tamar of his decision. It was egregious and deceitful to engage in sexual intercourse with Tamar without fulfilling the obligations of levirate marriage. Evidently, Onan took advantage of Tamar's humble dedication to Judah's household, vulnerability, compliance with the provisions of levirate marriage, and her desire to have her own children. Such actions by extension put Tamar at the risk of losing the family inheritance. One may even suspect that Onan considered Tamar as a threat to his entire ownership of the family inheritance. Consequently, God killed Onan because of his selfish and disobedient attitude in not only spilling the semen repeatedly, but also his continuous defrauding of Tamar, denying her access to family inheritance, and intentionally cutting off his brother's lineage – an act that amounted to complete destruction or corruption of morals which attract divine judgment.

Onan's dubious attitude contradicts both Divine and civil obligations to the poor, widows, and other vulnerable members of the society (Leviticus 19:9,10; Deuteronomy 10:18,19; 15:7-11; Isaiah 1:17; Amos 5:11-15). Individual's loyalty to the community was demonstrated through the fulfillment of their duties and responsibilities. The community's loyalty to the individual was demonstrated through empathy (e.g., protecting the poor, widows, providing for orphans) and the imposition of appropriate punishment for unlawful conduct (e.g., adultery, false testimony). A supreme dedication to "social justice and equity, which are closely associated with kindness and mercy," was intended. This dedication was broadened to encompass all of humanity, as the universality of YHWH indicated that the principles of justice and righteousness were relevant to every group of people (Knierim, 1995). Furthermore, YHWH would and could play a role in the implementation of justice and righteousness in His creation. For instance, sudden and premature death may be a form of divine retribution for disobedience (e.g., Amos 7:9; Deuteronomy 28; Leviticus 26) (Moberly, 1990). Therefore, proper relationships were not limited to a community; they were also established with YHWH. This explains the reason for the immediate intervention of God in killing Onan.

Sexual Exploitation of Women's Vulnerability

Sexual exploitation constitutes a violation of human rights rooted in gender discrimination, intertwining with various forms of social inequalities, and represents a continuum of violence predominantly directed towards women and girls, typically perpetrated by men (Bridging the Gap: Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, UN Women, 2020). Scholars have posited that sexual violence directed at women is deeply rooted in patriarchal cultures that perceive women as subordinate to men, leading to the assumption that women's bodies are accessible for male sexual exploitation. In addition to the dominance of male-centric cultural norms, economic deprivation stands out as a significant risk factor for sexual violence. The incidence of sexual violence is disproportionately elevated among marginalized and economically disadvantaged women and girls, as perpetrators frequently seek out these individuals as targets. (Jama & Bixby, 2021; Bonomi et al., 2017).

Furthermore, these victims are often less inclined to report such incidents or to be taken seriously when they do come forward (Ajayi et al., 2023). Women who received economic support from their partners, as well as those who achieved financial independence, exhibit a lower likelihood of experiencing sexual violence compared to those lacking such support (Steele et al., 2019). The repercussions of sexual violence on the physical and mental well-being of victims are profound and enduring. Individuals who have experienced sexual violence are more prone to exhibit elevated levels of post-traumatic stress disorder, psychological distress, depression, and suicidal thoughts (Nguyen et al., 2019).

The Hebrew Bible presents numerous instances of sexual violence, encompassing acts such as rape, threats of rape, sex trafficking, gender-based violence in the context of warfare, femicide, and various forms of sexual exploitation: the rape of Dinah (Genesis 34), the rape of Tamar (2 Samuel 13), the gang-rape and murder of the Levite's concubine (Judges 19–21), and the narrative involving Bathsheba and David (2 Samuel 11). While certain scholars may seek to either rationalize or contest these actions, this study unequivocally supports these categorizations within a biblical framework as an act of rape, fundamentally signifying male supremacy and aggression.

The situation involving Onan and Tamar can be categorized as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), which includes behaviors such as stalking, psychological aggression, physical violence, or sexual violence—actions and strategies employed by one partner to assert and sustain dominance over the other (Hassetedt & Rowan, 2016). Evidently, Onan consented to perform his *Levir* duty; however, he exercised undue masculine power over Tamar by having sexual relations with her and subsequently spilling his sperm without her consent and with the intention of severing his deceased brother's linage. Conceivably, he took advantage of Tamar's vulnerability and desperate desire to have a son. Onan's act thus amounts to sexual exploitation.

Theological implications of Onan's actions in relation to contraception

Gordon and Wenham (1994) assert that Onan's action violated Yahweh's covenant promise to Abraham and his descendants. This violation of Divine agenda (and not Onan's use of withdrawal method) perhaps led to Onan's untimely death. To argue that the use of contraception was what aroused Yahweh's anger against Onan might be untenable because there seems to be no implicit or explicit discussions about contraception in the Bible, and modern contraception methods were unavailable during Bible times (Gordon & Wenham, 1994).

Nonetheless, Holladay (2000) contends that while the incident in Genesis 38:8-10 is not fundamentally concerned with contraception as a broad concept, it does not imply that the text lacks relevance regarding contraception in the context of marriage. The Divine action of God in blessing Adam and Eve, along with the subsequent directive to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28), illustrates His intention for humanity to expand and flourish throughout the world. However, this should not be interpreted as a blanket mandate for indiscriminate procreation (Holladay, 2000). Contraception that aligns with moral and religious principles should be practiced within the boundaries of marriage and with the mutual consent of both partners - the husband and the wife. The objective ought not to be the total cessation of procreation, nor should it stem from avarice or self-serving motives. Furthermore, the approach to contraception must be handled with care to avoid subjecting the other partner to distressing challenges. Onan contravened all these intentions, rendering his actions sinful in the eyes of Yahweh (Holladay, 2000).

It therefore implies that Onan's withdrawal method would have been ethical and morally acceptable if it was with consent and not habitual. In other words, assuming Onan had fulfilled his levirate obligations towards Tamar and later withdraws with consent during certain sexual intercourse, he would not have been morally guilty. If he fulfilled his levirate duties but goes ahead to withdraw during sexual intercourse without consent, that could be exploitative with potential emotional and or psychological trauma on Tamar. Unfortunately, Onan proved insensitive of Divine and cultural obligations as well as Tamar's womanhood and emotions.

Genesis 38:8-10 and Its Ethical and Theological Implications for Family Planning

The biblical injunction to "be fruitful and multiply" is often debated as either a command or a blessing. If it is seen as a blessing, it emphasizes responsible stewardship of life rather than an

obligatory mandate to procreate endlessly. This interpretation supports the use of family planning to ensure the well-being of children and families (Moss & Bade, 2015). Modern Christian ethics often emphasize stewardship over creation, including responsible parenting. Contraception, when used to space or limit births responsibly, can be seen as an ethical decision that aligns with the principle of providing adequately for one's family. Humans are endowed with free will to make decisions, including those about family planning. Ethical frameworks suggest that decisions about contraception should be guided by considerations of health, economic stability, and mutual consent between partners (Isaacs, 2013).

Scholars such as Blomberg (1992) and Towner (2006) contend that the biblical perspective on God encompasses ultimate sovereignty over family planning. However, it is noted that within this sovereignty, mankind is afforded a degree of discretion. This is underscored by 1 Timothy 5:8, which emphasizes that providing for one's family is a fundamental responsibility, suggesting the necessity of a thoughtful evaluation of one's capacity to nurture children (Adjei et al., 2024). Waltke (1990) and White (2008) assert that it is God, rather than humanity, who governs the body, thereby suggesting that the purpose and importance of a sexual act may be wholly or partially undermined by the practice of family planning. They further assert that the Bible conveys the notion of divine sovereignty encompassing all aspects of life, including the conception and birth of children (Psalms 127:3); and that children are regarded as a divine gift, rather than merely a product of human choice or entitlement (Waltke, 1990; White, 2008).

However, this study is of the opinion that family planning between consenting married couples is ethically right considering the economic, physical and mental health of the family members. In this light, Pieterson and Fourie (2015) consent that contraception can function to fulfil elements of stewardship, just as we steward other dimensions of natural life through technology and human knowledge.

Sex has diverse roles in human life. First is marriage consummation (Genesis 2:24). Scripture repeatedly describes this relationship as a change of status, commitment, and sexual union in one-flesh terminology. In recent studies, oxytocin, "the bonding hormone" (Hollinger, 2009) provides veritable insight into couple's oneness and togetherness during sexual activity. The second purpose is procreation, as sexual intercourse is the means by which human life on earth begins and continues. This follows from the procreative mandate in Genesis 1:28, the biblical understanding of children as a divine gift, and nature itself. Hollinger (2009) submits that sex is inherently procreative, meaning that any sexual act must be in the context of procreation with a willingness to assume the potential fruit that comes from the act. Whereas the idea that sex is inherently procreative is tenable – the reasons couples use contraceptives, limiting every sexual act to the context of procreation undermines the pleasurable purpose of sex in marriage – especially for those who have completed the circle of childbirth or in old age. Clearly then, one's worldviews and culture invariably influence and shape human opinions on ethics and what constitutes 'good' behaviour (Nicolaides, 2020).

Conclusion

The narrative of Genesis 38:8-10 and its ethical reflections provide a rich foundation for understanding the complexities of family planning and contraception within a biblical framework. Onan's deliberate violation of familial and communal obligations through withdrawal during sexual intercourse constituted an ethical and moral infringement against God, Er's linage, and Tamar, which attracted divine judgment. Through his repeated and unjust actions, Onan took undue advantage of Tamar's vulnerability, desire for an heir, and loyalty to Judah's family. The actions

of Onan, interpreted through the lens of historical, cultural, ethical and theological contexts, highlight both the undue exercise of masculinity by men over women and the importance of moral responsibility, mutual consent, and the preservation of human dignity in marital and societal relationships. While the text does not explicitly condemn contraception, it emphasizes the ethical considerations and responsibilities inherent in decisions regarding procreation.

Contemporary Christians are called to balance divine providence, human stewardship, and the multiple purposes of sex within marriage. Responsible family planning, conducted with mutual consent and guided by considerations of health, economic stability, and moral integrity, aligns with the broader biblical mandate of stewardship. This approach ensures that family planning supports the well-being of individuals and families while upholding the sanctity of life and the ethical principles of love, unity, and responsibility. Ultimately, the discussion underscores the need for thoughtful and informed ethical reflection in addressing the challenges of modern family planning within a faith-based context.

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