


Genesis 38:8–10 read in the context of use of contraceptives by Christian couples



Authors:

Chisom S. Ugwuowo^{1,2} 

Damian O. Odo^{2,3} 

Affiliations:

¹Centre for Educational Services, Faculty of Education and Arts, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi, Nigeria

²Department of Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures, Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

³Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Corresponding author:

Damian Odo,
damian.odo@tuks.co.za

Dates:

Received: 26 Oct. 2024

Accepted: 28 Mar. 2025

Published: 22 May 2025

How to cite this article:

Ugwuowo, C.S. & Odo, D.O., 2025, 'Genesis 38:8–10 read in the context of use of contraceptives by Christian couples', *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81(1), a10336. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v81i1.10336>

Copyright:

© 2025. The Authors.
Licensee: AOSIS. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

Read online:



Scan this QR code with your smart phone or mobile device to read online.

The 21st century has witnessed harsh and soft criticisms on the issue of the use of contraceptives. This global argument has been ongoing in the religious sphere particularly in Christianity. The study is set to examine various views on the use of contraceptives. It also investigates Genesis 38:8–10 in its original context for proper application. Historical-critical method is employed in the study. It is discovered that whereas there are proponents of the use of contraceptives, there are others who are totally against it. The thriving force for this contention is religious faith and denominational doctrine. This has wrought some negative effects on couples, mostly Christian couples. The response of Christian faith and doctrine to this issue has not been clearly spelt out as some scholars who delved into this argument are many a time subjective in their analysis. To facilitate possible suggestion(s) and solution(s), the researchers intend to bring to bear a biblical perspective on this issue by studying Genesis 38:8–10. It is recommended that proper understanding of the texts of study would enhance better knowledge and application of contraceptives by Christian couples.

Contribution: In this study, the authors contend that adequate analysis of Genesis 1:28 and 38:8–10 would enhance proper knowledge of the texts and curb aggressive contention on the use of contraceptives particularly as regards married Christians. The application of exegetical findings would enhance human and societal development.

Keywords: Biblical approach; Genesis 1:28; Genesis 38:8–10; contraceptive; family planning; Christian couples.

Introduction

A biblical approach to the use of contraceptives among Christian couples has been a perennial debate over decades. Contraceptive or contraception 'is the intentional prevention of pregnancy by artificial or natural means' (Idris 2021:5). The use of contraceptive gives couples the opportunity to control the occurrence of pregnancy in order to maintain optimum family size as opposed to overpopulated families languishing in poverty. Using contraceptive by couples encourages family planning and its benefits. The World Health Organization (2019) states that family planning, most fundamentally, advances human rights. The use of contraceptive has been a strong contention among different Christian denominations across the globe and has divided them into two groups with opposite and contending views. Whereas one group advocates the use of contraceptives, the other group frowns at its use. The bone of contention remains that contraceptives and their applications are not natural, hence against the natural method approved by God. On the other hand, it is argued that the use of contraceptives is a divine endowment through which married couples could curb the overbearing of children. These two opposite views and beliefs have gone a long way to bring perennial conflicts between Christians in the contemporary dispensation. For instance, Zion (1992) and Srikanthan and Reid (2008) argue that in Eastern Orthodox, contraceptives may be used only within marriage; however, a mentality that excludes children on principle is unacceptable. However, according to LoPresti (2005), the Protestant church disapproves of the use of contraceptive as they maintain that it violates the divine command to multiply. The menace of this issue concerns itself with Christians quarrelling among each other in this regard; for the proponents who argue against the use of contraceptives, overbearing of offspring may be inevitable, and therefore contributing to overpopulation.

Contributing to the foregoing, Anyacho (2013) contends that some Christians probably reject methods of birth control other than natural methods because it is believed to be an inimical act against their object of worship (Ugwuowo & Chukwuka 2023). According to Oderinde (2001), the Catholic Church and some other Christian denominations such as Eastern Orthodox hold that responsible family planning is an important objective which can be pursued only within the context of the moral law, which teaches that there is an unbreakable union of the unitive

(or relation) and procreative meaning of material sexuality (Ugwuewo & Chukwuka 2023). Ugwuewo and Chukwuka (2023) posit that families with a large number of members struggle more than those with an ideal number to endure the economic downturn and some moral illnesses. There have been several attempts to limit the number of children once partners have had as many as their financial means will allow as couples may not be able to afford to give up their sexual duty to one another.

Most critics of the use of contraceptives by Christian couples base their contention on the Christian Scriptures, especially Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 38:8–10, but their inability to give a thorough exegetical study of these two texts remains a puzzle. Various views on contraceptive methods from biblical perspectives are put forward. Ugwuowo and Chukwuka (2023) observe that:

[M]any Christians cite the story of Onan's application of coitus interruptus in Genesis 38:7–10, where he perished because of God's annoyance. Other than the birth control method, some argue that Onan's death was caused by his evil and self-centred motives. (p. 7)

Oderinde (2001:5) avers that 'some Christians are of the view that *[the]* practice of birth control is to disobey God's command to propagate the race, quoting Genesis 1:28'. Iwe (1979) opines:

[T]hat the church must realise that it is legitimate to control *[the]* mortality rate without any accusation or interference with the course of nature, it is also acceptable to assert rotational control over fertility and human reproduction under honest circumstances. (p. 146)

Anyacho (2013:19) argues that 'birth control or family planning should be encouraged so that the quality of the future generation may not be jeopardized'. Nevertheless, the researchers would give a biblical position on contraceptive use by studying its context in the Old Testament text (Gn 38:8–10).

The research methodology adopted in this study is the historical-critical method of exegesis. This method contends that a biblical text is not written out of nothing. There is an event or occurrence that triggered the need for such passage. Obiorah (2015:90) notes that '[the] [h]istorical-[c]ritical method takes cognizance of the historical development of the biblical passage, which ha[s] diverse audiences in the course of time'. This approach is considered appropriate since this study inquires to know an actual context of Genesis 38:8-10 in regard to the use of contraceptives. The researchers contend that better understanding of the use of contraceptives from the above study texts would enhance Christians' knowledge on the phenomenon as well as curb unnecessary contention and the wrong approach to it.

Hebrew text of Genesis 38:8–10

18 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לְאוֹנָן כֹּה אֶל־אִשְׁתְּ אָחִיד וַיָּבֵם אֹתָהּ וַתָּבֵם זֶרַע לְאָחִיד׃
 19 וַיַּעַבְדֵּם אוֹנָן כִּי לֹא יָהֵג הַזֶּרַע וַתֵּהָלֶם אִם־כֹּה אֶל־אִשְׁתְּ אָחִיו וַשִּׁחַת אֲרָצָה
 לְבִלְתִּי נַמְוָרָע לְאָחִיו׃

10 וַיִּרַע בְּעֵינַי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיָּמָת גַּם־אֹתוֹ:

Hebrew text of Genesis 1:28

28 וַיִּבְרָךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ
אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּהָ וּרְדּוּ בְּדָגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיַּת־
הָרֶמֶשׂת עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

English translation of Genesis 38:8–10

The English translation (New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]) reads as follows:

8 Then Judah said to Onan, ‘Go in to your brother’s wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her; raise up offspring for your brother’.

9 But since Onan knew that the offspring would not be his, he spilled his semen on the ground whenever he went in to his brother's wife, so that he would not give offspring to his brother.

10 What he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death also. (NRSV)

English translation of Genesis 1:28

The English translation (NRSV) of the verse reads as follows:

28 God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. (NRSV)

Textual analysis of Genesis 38:8–10

Looking at various English translations and the Hebrew text of Genesis 38:8–10, one would observe that there are difference(s) in the use of a few words. For instance, the Hebrew word זָרַחַת translated as ‘he spilled it’ in KJV and LXE, ‘he wasted his seed’ in NAS, and ‘he spilled his semen’ in NRSV does not give the actual representation of the original manuscript. The Hebrew word or phrase וַיִּזְרַחַת means ‘and he spilled’. In the Hebrew text, the word ‘spilled’ does not have a direct object as indicated in various English renditions. The addition of the elements ‘it’, ‘his seed’ and ‘his semen’ is implied. According to Guzik (2018), the word ‘marry’ is used in the English version, while in the Hebrew text, the word אָסַף לָהּ [astaltah] is used, which means ‘to take as wife’ or ‘to marry’. The word ‘seed’ is used, while in the Hebrew text, the word זָרַחַת [zar’ah] is used, which means ‘offspring’ or ‘descendants’. The word ‘displease’ is used, while in the Hebrew text, the word רָע [ra] is used, which means ‘evil’ or ‘bad’.

Historical context of Genesis 38:8–10

The provenance of sex and procreation is traced to Genesis 1:28 as a divine command. Sexual satisfaction and subsequent fertilisation, pregnancy and giving birth are natural law from Yahweh to Jews, and the entire human race. In addition, Magnuson (2000) contends that:

[I]n Jewish tradition and belief, Genesis 1:28 is considered to be a moral imperative, a religious duty that is meant to channel sexual passion for the purpose of the perpetuation of humankind. (p. 26)

Arguably, Genesis 38:8–10 shares a theological affinity with Genesis 1:28. Clifford and Murphy (1989) posit that the event in Genesis 38:8–10:

[W]as perhaps the practice of the Ancient Near Eastern nations from where Israel's forebears dwelt. This law gives [the] adult male member of every family the responsibility of fulfilling sexual duties to the wife of his deceased brother with the prime aim of procreation on behalf of the deceased brother. (Ugwuewo & Chukwuka 2023)

Ugwuewo and Chukwuka (2023) aver that:

[L]evirate marriage was a common and compulsory practice in the then society, and it was accepted and upheld. This gave clue to why the survived son of Judah, Onan, who was at the age of responsibility, never complained nor was reluctant about being remarried by her sister-in-law. (p. 7)

Sexual intercourse with one's deceased brother's wife under levirate was a prevalent cultural practice.

The narrative in Genesis 38:8–10 is set in the context of the patriarchal age, likely during the early second millennium BCE. It reflects the social structures and norms of the time, including kinship ties, inheritance practices and the significance of family honour. The narrative also occurs in Canaan, the Promised Land, which underscores the importance of land, inheritance and the continuity of family lines in the covenant community. The passage reflects the patriarchal structure of ancient Near Eastern societies, where women often had limited agency. Tamar, as the widow, is left vulnerable without a husband or children. The levirate marriage custom aimed to protect women's rights and social status, which were directly tied to their ability to bear children and maintain family lineage. Tamar's situation illustrates the societal pressures on women to produce heirs and the consequences of failing to do so (Guzik 2018).

The connectivity between Genesis 38:8–10 and Genesis 1:28

Arguably, Genesis 38:8–10 shares a theological intention with Genesis 1:28. The theological content of Genesis 1:28 affirms divine approval for procreation and development of humanity. Genesis 38:8–10 condemns an attempt to stop perpetuation of one's generation through inhuman act. Looking at the texts, one can observe that there is agreement in divine approval of begetting of generation. Hence, the event in Genesis 38:8–10 could be traced to the divine command in Genesis 1:28.

There is a contention on the use of the Hebrew word 'to fill' used in Genesis 1:28. One proponent wrote that the Hebrew verb 'to fill' means 'fill up the world to overflowing'. God's blessing is not zero population, but maximum population.

They also point out that there is no place in Scripture where God rescinds this command (Campbell 2003:1; Grisanti 2012). Birth control represents disobedience to this command to fill the earth. They grant that God does not require unmarried people to have children, but contend that all married couples must regularly pursue having children. A key assumption is that procreation is the primary purpose of marriage (Grisanti 2012; Owen 1990). Moreover:

[A]ll who reject birth control, regard it as rebellion against God's legitimate authority over reproduction. The fact that the Bible presents God as the one who opens and closes a woman's womb. prohibits couples from taking the matter of the timing and number of children into their own hands. As stated above, some couples reject all means of artificial birth control, but are willing to embrace natural methods and believe that this does not represent a denial of God's sovereignty. (Grisanti 2012)

The three important Hebrew words in this text פָּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמִלְאוּ translated as 'be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth' need to be elucidated in the context of the text. The Hebrew word פָּרוּ which is imperative in the text means 'to bear fruit' or 'to be fruitful'. The usage suggests that bearing fruit is not only in the aspect of reproduction. There are numerous aspects of life where man can be fruitful. According to Koehler and Baumgartner (2000:99), פָּרוּ refers specifically to 'the fruit of the vine, or of the fig tree but more importantly to the fruit of the womb, resulting from intercourse between the male and female'. Moreover, the second Hebrew word וּרְבוּ translated as 'multiply' is also a qal imperative denoting command. The word is used to mean 'to be many which could be interpreted in the context of [an] increase in number', or 'to become great'. Ahiamadu (2010:100) concurs that the word is a qal imperative and it means 'to be many' or 'to be great'. The root 'is a word used mostly in quantitative contexts, but sometimes also in a metaphorical sense', meaning 'to have many children'. However, to increase in number may not literally be in the context of human population only. It could extend to knowledge and other material possessions. The third crucial Hebrew word וּמִלְאוּ which means 'to fill', 'to be full', or 'to be filled' is also imperative, and is used to designate that it is a divine order that the earth would not be empty of human existence. According to Hamilton (1990), God gives mankind in Genesis 1:28 two key assignments through five imperatives: procreation (be fruitful, increase in number and fill) and dominion (subdue and rule) (Grisanti 2012). Magnuson (2000) avers that:

[I]n Jewish tradition and interpretation, the phrase is considered to be a moral imperative, a religious duty that is meant to channel sexual passion for the purpose of the perpetuation of humankind. (p. 26)

Genesis 1:28 is also interpreted from a theological perspective. On this note, Magnuson (2000:27) contends that 'in Christian theology, Genesis 1:28 is often interpreted as "a moral command expressed in terms of a creation mandate"'. Wenham (1987:33) posits that following Genesis 1:27, the imperative to 'be fruitful and multiply' in verse 28 is a pointer to procreation as the divine purpose of marriage. Genesis 1:28 is also interpreted in terms of 'the propagation

of the race, which was an unconditional command' (Ademiluka 2020). However, none of the three important Hebrew words in the original text of Genesis 1:28 gives the impression that it is a divine command for one man and one woman in the circle of marriage to bear children beyond the number they can cater for morally, economically and otherwise. It is noteworthy to state that the text is used to address mankind other than a particular single man as some interpreters wrongly surmise. The imperative nature of the text is specifically used to refer to the common reproductive duty as well as other related duties of man on earth. Those Hebrew words are deliberately used to denote that every husband and wife has the responsibility of procreating another generation through sexual intercourse. However, it does not necessarily imply that each husband and wife must give birth to a specific range of children. The text is silent on that. It is unnecessary and out of place to impose on married couples the responsibility of making the reproduction of offspring the prime purpose of every sexual intercourse.

Close reading of Genesis 38:8–10

The most important verse in Genesis 38:8–10 that needs insight and clarification is verse 9. The close reading will therefore focus on this crucial verse for the purpose of this study. Verse 9 narrates that Onan used the coitus interruptus method while meeting his brother's wife sexually. He has inherited his brother's wife as his wife through levirate marriage in accordance with the prevalent tradition of that time. The contention that usually ensues from this text is whether Onan was killed because God does not advocate the use of contraceptives or not. The Hebrew sentence *וַיִּדַע אֹנָן כִּי לֹא הָיָה הַנָּשִׂא אֵלָיו אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ אֶחָיו וַיִּשְׁתָּה* rendered in the English translation as 'but since Onan knew that the offspring would not be his, he spilled his semen on the ground whenever he went in to his brother's wife' shows self-centredness. Ugwuewo and Chukwuka (2023) assert that:

The passage makes clear Onan's hidden agenda right away. Furthermore, based on the text's tone, Onan was required to take his older brother's widow in a sexually linked role under the legal and cultural requirement of levirate marriage. His decision to accompany her inside was not made voluntarily. He had already realized that the responsibility would not benefit him in return, which is why he first stated its implication. (p. 8)

According to Clifford and Murphy (1989), Onan's offence is obvious; he selfishly refuses the responsibility of fulfilling his duty to his brother, as the law provided. Leale (2025:1) asserts that Onan's action was prompted by a low motive. It was as selfish as it was vile. Onan's design was to preserve the whole inheritance for his own house. Henry (1996) avers that even though Onan agreed to marry the widow, he refused to raise seed for his brother because he was obligated to do so, despite the fact that he had severely abused his own body, his wife and his brother's memory. Onan's primary motivation was not to raise children for his deceased older brother as tradition dictates.

Nelson (1997) interprets the text as follow: Because Onan knew that he would not perpetuate his own name but the family of the deceased, he selfishly avoided conception by spilling the semen. Not only did he fail to honour his dead brother, but he was also stealing his brother's inheritance by taking his wife without producing offspring for him. In a similar vein, Walvoord and Zuck (1985) posit that by the custom of the levirate marriage, Onan was to marry Tamar, the widow of his brother, and raise up offspring for his brother. However, Onan repeatedly used that law for sexual gratification. He took advantage of the situation but refused the responsibility that is associated with it. Consequently, the LORD took his life. It was Onan's action in verse 9 that led to his death in verse 10. The LORD considered his selfishness as an evil act; therefore, it cost him his dear life. The Hebrew word *עָרִיז* translated as 'displeasing' means in other words 'to break, to be evil, bad'. This gives an indication as to why the LORD considered Onan's act as an act of wickedness or evil, and therefore his life was taken instantly.

It is crucial to understand the text from its contextual point of view. The use of contraceptive method, particularly the coitus interruptus method or also called the withdrawal method, by Onan is not the reason for his demise. In addition, Ugwuewo and Chukwuka (2023) contend that according to the reading of the text's social context, Onan was not called 'wicked' or 'evil' because he employed the withdrawal method to avoid getting pregnant during sexual activity, but rather because he had a sinister and hidden reason for doing so. On the contrary, Augustine (2024) argues that the story of Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) is meant to illustrate the importance of procreation and the rejection of birth control. According to Augustine, the passage shows that God is the one who determines the number of children a couple will have, and that human attempts to control or limit conception are a form of pride and disobedience. Giving allegiance to this claim, Aquinas (2024) also interpreted the passage as a rejection of birth control. He argues that the story of Judah and Tamar is meant to illustrate the importance of the conjugal act being open to the possibility of conception. Aquinas (2024) further contends that the use of contraception would be a form of 'unnatural' behaviour that goes against God's plan for human reproduction. However, the context of the text does not substantiated any of the ideas presented by Augustine and Aquinas respectively. The total rejection of the contraceptive method used in agreement by married partners is therefore unsubstantiated and could not be read into the text. Such submission fall outside the context of the study of the text. The finding of the exegesis shows that the text focussed on the reason for the use of the contraceptive method, not necessarily on the contraceptive itself. Moreover, it is the ulterior motive for using the contraceptive that may make it evil or callous. The text as shown from the discovery of the exegesis does not disapprove of or forbid the use of contraceptives by married couples during sexual intercourse, especially when the married couple do not want to have a baby at the moment.

Genesis 38:8–10 and contraceptive use by married couples

As was earlier shown in the context of the study of the text, Genesis 38:8–10 shares a theological intentionality with Genesis 1:28 that gives the husband and wife a divine imperative to procreate for subsequent generations. However, the three crucial Hebrew words did not emphasise the bearing of fruit and being multiplied in terms of human populace only. Although some interpreters of the text gave the impression that it is all about the increase in population of human beings as the sole duty of man and his wife, it is not the only thing that can be harnessed from the text. Husband and wife are divinely commanded to make being productive point of duty and reason for their existence virtually in all aspects of human existence. Arguably, married couples are not given licence to overpopulate society. The imperative to procreate does not imply that married couples must give birth to children more than their financial and economic capacity can carry.

Genesis 38:8–10 remains a good background to educate members of contemporary society, particularly married partners. The use of contraceptives by married couples to control birth is not prohibited in the text. From the exegetical discovery of the text, it is the motive behind the use of contraceptives that determines whether it is ethical or evil. It does not form part of the findings of the exegesis that married couples may not use any contraceptive method to control birth and space childbearing. It is an ulterior motive as well as selfishness and other related reasons that make the use of contraceptive immoral or wicked as revealed from the exegesis.

The chief character in the narrative, Onan, was killed by the LORD because of his ulterior motive for using the withdrawal method. It is not indicated that he was killed for attempting to use the method. Married couples are warned to desist from any ulterior motive of using contraceptive method against one another. The result of the exegesis also shows that Onan did not consider his sexual partner before making the choice to use or not to use the contraceptive. This is highly selfish. Married couples must be in agreement when they use the contraceptive method during vaginal sex.

Moreover, it is revealed that Onan was more interested in taking the primogeniture of his elder brother. It was the reason why he decided to use the coitus interruptus method to obstruct his sexual partner (his levirate wife) from getting pregnant. He did that blatantly against the will of his levirate wife. Such an action is highly inconsiderate and inhuman. It shows a high level of callousness. Husband and wife should consider each other before making a choice of using any contraceptive method while fulfilling their sexual duties as married couples.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the researchers make the following recommendations:

- The proponents of the contentions on the use of contraceptives should make their argument towards human value, human development and healthy life; and in line with the context of biblical text(s).
- Married couples should be in agreement when using contraceptive during vaginal sex.
- The use of contraceptive should be by mutual agreement among Christian couples with the sole aim to curb overpopulation in human society.
- The church should make it a point of duty to sensitise their members on the proper context of Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 38:8–10 to avoid the wrong application of the texts regarding sex and contraceptives. The church can achieve this by inviting experts in biblical studies to handle such a crucial and sensitive aspect of human life.
- Christian couples should seek expert advice on the best healthy way(s) of birth control using contraceptives to avoid the risks associated with them.
- Christian denominations should not be too fanatical in criticising the use of contraceptives.

Conclusion

The article explored Genesis 38:8–10 in the context of the use of contraceptives among Christian couples. The study provided insight into the importance of familial duties in ancient Israelite society and its contextual relevance for Christian couples in contemporary society. The use of contraceptive has remained a controversial discourse across the globe. This study contended 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.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

C.S.U. was responsible for conceptualisation, formal analysis, investigation, writing of the original draft, visualisation, and resources. D.O.O. was responsible for methodology, visualisation, validation, resources, and writing-review and editing.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Ethical consideration

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings and content.

References

- Ademiluka, S.O., 2020, 'Be fruitful and multiply: Examining Genesis 1:28 as a basis for the adoption of polygamy as a solution to childlessness amongst Nigerian Christians', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 41(1), a2116. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v41i1.2116>
- Ahiyemadu, A., 2010, 'A postcolonial critical assessment of the imago dei in Gen 1:26–28 in Nigerian perspective', *Scriptura* 103(1), 97–106. <https://doi.org/10.7833/103-0-591>
- Anyacho, E.O., 2013, *Religion in society an introduction to eco-theology and justice*, rev. edn., C.P Globe Printer and Publishers, Calabar.
- Aquinas, T., 2024, 'Summa Theologica', in *The Summa Theologica Of St Thomas Aquinas(part iij) vol Lxxxiii: St Thomas Aquinas*, transl. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Burns, Oates & Washbourne, London.
- Augustine, A., 2024, *On marriage and concupiscence*, transl. R.J. Teske, New City Press, New York, NY, viewed 26 October 2024, from <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/on-marriage-and-concupiscence-11758>.
- Campbell, J.D., 2003, *Be fruitful and multiply. What the Bible says about having children*, viewed 27 March 2025, from urn:lcp:befruitfulmultip00unse:epub:2d378718-8c81-40d5-af60-b56d338cbe8f.
- Clifford, S.J. & Murphy, O.C., 1989, 'Genesis', in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, pp. 8–43, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, New Jersey, NY.
- Grisanti, M.A., 2012, 'Birth control and the Christian: Recent discussion and basic suggestions', *Master's Seminary Journal* 21, 85–112.
- Guzik, D., 2018, 'The enduring word Bible commentary', viewed 22 April 2025, from <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/genesis-38/>
- Hamilton, V.P., 1990, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, NICOT, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.
- Henry, M., 1996, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and unabridged in one volume*, Hendrickson, Peabody, MA.
- Idris, R., 2021, *Contraceptive methods: Overview*, Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research, Geneva.
- Iwe, N.S.S., 1979, *Christianity, culture, and colonialism*, RNSC, Port Harcourt
- Koehler, L. & Baumgartner, W., 2000, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Brill, Leiden.
- Leale, T.H., 2025, 'The sin of Onan', in *Bible illustrator*, pp. 204–356, Westbow Press, Bloomington, IN.
- Lindh, I., 2011, *Factors influencing women's choice of contraception*, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology Institute of Clinical Sciences, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg
- LoPresti, A.F., 2005, 'Christianity', in C. Manning & P. Zuckerman (eds.), *Sex and religion*, Thomson Wadsworth, Toronto.
- Magnuson, K.T., 2000, 'Marriage, procreation and infertility: Reflections on Genesis', *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 4(1), 26–43.
- Nelson, T., 1997, *New Geneva study Bible*, electronic edn., Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN.
- Obiorah, M.J., 2015, *Bibliotheca Divina: A basic introduction to the study of the Bible*, University of Nigeria Press Ltd, Enugu.
- Oderinde, J.T., 2001, *Social ethics and contemporary issues*, Delma and Sons, Ilorin.
- Owen, S.A., 1990, *Letting God plan your family*, Crossway, Wheaton, IL.
- Srikanthan, A. & Reid, R.L., 2008, 'Religious and cultural influences on contraception. Women's health', *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada* 30(2), 129–137. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1701-2163\(16\)32736-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1701-2163(16)32736-0)
- Ugwuewo, C.S. & Chukwuka, S.S., 2023, 'Understanding birth control in the context of Genesis 38: 8–10', *Global Scientific and Academic Research Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*.
- Walvoord, J.F. & Zuck, R.B., 1985, *Dallas theological seminary: The Bible knowledge commentary: An exposition of the scriptures*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL.
- Wenham, G.J., 1987, *Genesis 1–15: Word Biblical commentary*, Word Books, Waco, TX.
- World Health Organization, 2019, *Contraception*, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, Geneva.
- Zion, W.B., 1992, *Orthodoxy and contraception in: Eros and transformation: Sexuality and marriage – An eastern orthodox perspective*, University Press of America, New York, NY.