Man's Best Friend: The Comradeship between Man and Dog in the Lands of the Bible

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This article examines the friendship between people and dogs in the lands of the Bible—a rapport that is well documented throughout the Fertile Crescent, from Hatti to Egypt. In order to enrich the discussion, I shall also refer to examples from the classical and rabbinic literature.

1. The uniqueness of the human-canine relation

Numerous cultures regard the dog as man's best friend and the most popular of all human pets.[1] Although no firm consensus exists regarding the etymological source of the Semitic term *kaleb*, the canine—commonly acknowledged to be a subspecies of the gray wolf—is generally considered to be the first domesticated animal.[2] The latest research contends that the dog's domestication began around 12,000 to 15,000 years ago, the first evidence apparently coming from eastern Asia.[3] This is supplemented by findings from western Asia, South America, western Europe (Denmark and Britain), and Russia—indicating the rapidity of its spread.[4] The earliest archaeological

[1] See Ádám Miklósi, *Dog: Behaviour, Evolution, and Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 53.

[2] D. Winton Thomas, "*Kelebh* 'Dog': Its Origin and Some Usages of it in the Old Testament," *VT* 10 (1960): 410–12; Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English* (Jerusalem: Carta, 1987), 276; Brian Hesse, "Animal Husbandry and Human Diet in the Ancient Near East," *CANE* 1:206–10. Some scholars allege that an intermediate stage existed between the dog's differentiation from the wolf and its domestication: see Janice Koler-Mutznick, "The Origin of the Dog Revisited," *Anthrozoös* 15 (2002):98–117.

[3] Peter Savolainen et al., "Genetic Evidence for an East Asian Origin of Domestic Dogs," *Science* 298 (2002): 1610–13.

[4] See Jennifer A. Leonard et al., "Ancient DNA Evidence for Old World Origin of New World Dogs," *Science* 298 (2002): 1613–16, esp. 1616; Simon J. M. Davis, *The Archaeology of Animals* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 127–32; Helmut Hemmer, *Domestication: The Decline of Environmental Appreciation* (trans. H. Beckhaus; Cambridge UK: Cambridge

evidence of the dog in the Middle East comes from the Epipalaeolithic Natufian culture, a dog buried next to a human body discovered at Einan in the Hula Valley.[5] A dog is included in the numerous stone or wooden figurines of pets that have been found—these likewise being known from the Chalcolithic period.[6] Dogs also appear to have played an important role in the Neolithic or Agricultural Revolution.[7]

Following its domestication, the canine appears to have developed into dozens of species, distinguished from one another by size, body form, length of hair, speed, and behavioral traits.[8] Some dogs were deliberately bred for specific purposes—guarding, hunting, herding, etc.[9] According to various scholarly estimations, there are between 60 and 77 million dogs today in the USA alone, with dozens of pet cemeteries scattered across the

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University Press, 1990), 38–44; Paula Wapnish and Brian Hesse, "Dogs," *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Archaeology in the Near East* (ed. Eric M. Meyers; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 166–67; Juliet Clutton-Brock, *A Natural History of Domesticated Mammals* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 47–58; idem, *Animals as Domesticates: A World View Through History* (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 2012), 92–94; Douglas J. Brewer, Donald B. Redford, and Susan Redford, *Domestic Plants and Animals: The Egyptian Origins* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1994), 110–14; John P. Scott, "Dog," *Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropedia* (14th ed., 1972), 7:542.

[5] Simon J.M. Davis and François R. Valla, "Evidence for Domestication of the Dog 12,000 Years Ago in Natufian of Israel," *Nature* 276 (1978): 608–10; Paula Wapnish and Brian Hesse, "Pampered Pooches or Plain Pariahs?: The Ashkelon Dog Burials," *BA* 56/2 (1993): 55–80, esp. 69; Ofer Bar-Yosef and Yosef Garfinkel, *The Prehistory of Israel: Human Cultures Before Writing* (Jerusalem: Ariel, 2008), 117 (Hebrew).

[6] See Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible 10,000–586 B.C.E.* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 37; Friedrich S. Bodenheimer, *Animal and Man in Bible Lands* (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 153.

[7] See Jarret A. Lobell and Eric Powell, "More than Man's Best Friend," *Archaeology* 63 (2010): 26–35, esp. 26.

[8] See Avi Arbel, *Mapa's Dictionary of Mammals* (Tel Aviv: Mapa, 2008), 216 (Hebrew); Miklósi, *Dog: Behaviour, Evolution, and Cognition*, 56.

[9] See Yaron Dekel, "Biyut ha-kelev [The Domestication of the Dog]," *Animals and Society* 21 (2003): 80–95, esp. 85 (Hebrew); Miklósi, *Dog: Behaviour, Evolution, and Cognition*, 56.

country.[10] The annual cost of keeping dogs and cats as pets in the U.S. is estimated at 30 billion dollars.[11]

It is reasonable to assume that the special canine-human relationship arose from the animal's attributes and traits. In the words of Menahem Dor, "In its wide-ranging roles and dispersion across the globe, the dog occupies the primary place amongst domesticated animals. Strong family and social feelings have led the dog—the loyalest of all creatures—to become closely attached to human beings. His special qualities—his sharp senses, alertness, intelligence, patience, and submission to a pack leader—have equipped the dog to fulfill numerous roles."[12] Temple Grandin surmises that, over the years, dogs having become the most proficient of all animals at living and communicating in the human environment. The two species enjoying a unique mutual relationship: "People and dogs unconsciously train each other all the time. The natural state of life for dogs is to live with people."[13] Humans and canines interact via body language and an exchange of looks.[14] From the human perspective, dogs appear to meet our needs in almost the same way as other human beings, and are frequently regarded as members of the family and chosen because their personality accords with our own.[15] The

[10] See Lobell and Powell, "More than Man's Best Friend," 26; Laurie Ragatz et al., "Vicious Dogs! The Antisocial Behaviors and Psychological Characteristics of Owners," *Journal of Forensic Science* 54 (2009): 699–703, esp. 699–700; Debra L. Stephens and Ronald P. Hill, "The Loss of Animal Companions: A Humanistic and Consumption Perspective," *Society and Animals* 4 (1996): 189–210, esp. 189.

[11] Nadav Levi, "Dogs and Cats: The Healers in Our Home?," *Animals and Society* 42 (2010): 45–50, esp. 45 (Hebrew).

[12] Menahem Dor, *The Fauna in the Times of the Bible, Mishnah, and Talmud* (Tel Aviv: Grafor-Daftal, 1997), 69 (Hebrew).

[13] Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson, *Animals Make Us Human* (Orlando Florida: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009), 26.

[14] Hanan Rotem, "Mashma'ut ha-dialog ha-lo miluli adam-kelev [The Meaning of the Non-Verbal Dialogue between Man and Dogs]," *Animals and Society* 36 (2008): 25–32, esp. 29 (Hebrew); Doron Elia, "Ha-kelev ke-meqasher beyn ha-adam le-yalduto [The Dog as Connecting a Person with His Childhood]," *Animals and Society* 37 (2008): 38–47, esp. 43 (Hebrew).

[15] See Barrie Gunter, *Pets and People: The Psychology of Pet Ownership* (London: Whurr Publishers 1999), 35; Sadahiko Nakajima, Mariko Yamamoto, and Natsumi Yoshimoto, "Dogs Look Like Their Owners: Replications with Racially Homogenous Owner Portraits," *Anthrozoös* 22 (2009): 173–81, esp. 180–81; Russell W. Belk, "Metaphoric Relationship with Pets," *Society and Animals* 4 (1996): 121–45, esp. 126, 138.

closer dogs live to their owners, the stronger the bond between them is likely to be.[16] Some thus argue that the canine occupies a type of intermediate position between humans and the animal kingdom.[17] The bond between them creates a sense of security in both owner and pet, dog and human forming the most important focus for one another.[18] Generally speaking, the kinship appears to exert a positive effect upon human health, as well as bestow social gain.[19]

As social creatures, canines enjoy human company. Designed by nature to live in packs, when bereft of their own kind dogs will adopt humans as their fellows, regarding the head of the family as their pack leader and acknowledging his/her authority.[20] The complex relationship between human and canine forms the basis upon which the animal can serve as an ally and aide in all sorts of functions and roles.[21] Contemporary scholars note that men tend to be identified more with dogs, women with cats.[22] Studies suggest that men in fact prefer dogs as pets and women prefer cats—a division that can be traced as back as far as ancient Egypt.[23]

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[16] Elsie R. Shore, Michelle L. Riley, and Deanna K. Douglas, "Pet Owner Behaviors and Attachment to Yard versus House Dogs," *Anthrozoös* 19 (2006): 325–34.
[17] Sophia Menache, "Dogs: God's Worst Enemies?," *Society and Animals* 5 (1997): 22–34, esp. 24.
[18] Gail F. Melson, "Psychology and the Study of Human-Animal Relations," *Society and Animals* 10 (2002): 347–52; Elia, "Ha-kelev ke-meqasher beyn ha-adam le-yalduto," 42–44.
[19] Levi, "Dogs and Cats," 45–46; Yitzhak Schnell and Ma'anit Ichilov, "Dog Parks as a Source of Social Capital," *Animals and Society* 45 (2012): 5–20 (Hebrew).
[20] David Taylor, *You and Your Dog* (London: Knopf, 1986), 13; Michael W. Fox, "Dogs," *New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropedia* (15th ed., 1992), 17:444; Noah Harel, "On Dogs, Wolves and Family Matters," *Animals and Society* 41 (2010): 43–45, esp. 44 (Hebrew).
[21] Nathalie Savalios, Nicolas Lescureux, and Florence Brunois, "Teaching the Dog and Learning from the Dog: Interactivity in Herding Dog Training and Use," *Anthrozoös* 26 (2013): 77–91, esp. 88.
[22] Robert W. Mitchell and Alan L. Ellis, "Cat Person, Dog Person, Gay, or Heterosexual: The Effect of Labels on Man's Perceived Masculinity, Femininity, and Likability," *Society and Animals* 21 (2013): 1–16, esp. 1–3; Samuel D. Gosling, Carson J. Sandy, and Jeff Potter, "Personalities of Self-Identified 'Dog People' and 'Cat People,'" *Anthrozoös* 23 (2010): 213–22, esp. 218.
[23] See Gunter and Furnham, *Pets and People*, 27; Patrick F. Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 83.

The human-canine bond is reflected in numerous early cultures, mythology and folklore—including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Mongolia, the Celts, Eskimos, Indians, Aztecs, and African tribes.[24]

2. The friendship between humans and dogs in the lands of the Bible

When we examine the biblical lands and time period, it is readily apparent that recognition of the canine's qualities quickly made the local inhabitants adopt it as a partner and collaborator in peaceful and pugnacious enterprises—hunting, herding, games, and warfare alike—with the friendliest ones also serving as pets.[25] Although dogs were used mainly for hunting and herding in ancient Egypt, their gaming capacities appear to have been evident from the beginning of the First Dynasty (third millennium B.C.E.)—as also in Mesopotamia, the classical world, and the Second Temple and mishnaic and talmudic periods.[26]

Modern scholars contend that six distinctive canine breeds were known in the biblical world—the small sheepdog, the light and quick hunting dog, the large hunting dog, the breed from which the pariah developed, and the Egyptian pet dog.[27]

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[24] Roy Willis, ed., *World Mythology* (New York: Henry Holt, 1993), 109, 182; Maria Leach ed., *The Standard Dictionary of Folklore Mythology and Legend* (New York: Harper & Row 1972), 519; Manfred Lurker, "Dogs," *Encyclopedia of Religion* (ed. Mircea Eliade; New York: Macmillan, 1987), 4:395–97.

[25] Elkanah Bilik and Haim Beinart, "Dog," *Encyclopedia Biblica* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute 1962), 4:110–13 (Hebrew); G. Johannes Botterweck, "Keleb," *TDOT* 7:146–47; Oded Borowski, *Every Living Thing: Daily Use of Animals in Ancient Israel* (London: Altamira Press, 1998), 133–40; Patrick F. Houlihan, "Canines," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1:229; Billie Jean Collins, "The Puppy in Hittite Ritual," *JCS* 42 (1990): 211–26, esp. 211–12.

[26] See Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 77; Clutton-Brock, *Animals as Domesticates*, 58–59; Bilik and Beinart, "Dog," 111–13; Sophia Menache, "Dogs in Classical Tradition," in Ofra Rimon, ed., *"Couched as a Lion … Who Shall Rouse Him Up"(Genesis 49:9): Depictions of Animals from the Leo Mildenberg Collection* (Haifa: Hecht Museum, University of Haifa, 1999), 53*–57*; Joshua Schwartz, "Dogs in Jewish Society in the Second Temple Period and in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud," *JJS* 55 (2004): 244–77, esp. 250, 262; idem, "Dogs and Cats in Jewish Society in the Second Temple, Mishnah and Talmud Periods," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies: Division B: History of the Jewish People* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies 2000), 25–34.

[27] Bilik and Beinart, "Dog," 110–11; Elizabeth Douglas van Buren, *The Fauna of Ancient Mesopotamia as Represented in Art* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1939), 14; Dale

We learn of the types of canines known in ancient Egypt from Egyptian art—from the pre-dynastic period onwards—which portrays the close bond between the two species.[28] A relief from the Early Kingdom depicts a dog and its master eating together mouth to mouth.[29] A bronze Elamite statue dated to the twentieth–eighteenth centuries represents a man walking two dogs wearing double collars. A Mesopotamian statue of a dog's head—well-groomed and collared—dating from the same period appears to have formed part of a larger artifact.[30] An early Hittite relief similarly portrays a man carrying a dog.[31]

The rearing of dogs appears to have been practiced throughout the ancient Near East. The Egyptian "Story of Sinuhe"—dating from the Twelfth Dynasty (the first half of the twentieth century BCE)—refers to a top-ranking official who, for reasons unclear, traveled northwards. Having reached *Rṭnw*—i.e., Canaan—he enjoyed a life of fine wining and dining in his self-imposed exile in Gubla/Byblos: "Loaves were made for me daily, and wine as daily fare, cooked meat, roast fowl, as well as desert game. For they snared for me and laid it before me, in addition to the catch of my hounds. Many sweets were made for me and milk dishes of kinds."[32] Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten of the New Kingdom also appears to have kept royal kennels.[33]

J. Osborn and Jana Osbornová, *The Mammals of Ancient Egypt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1998), 57–60.

[28] Eugen Strouhal*, Life of the Ancient Egyptians* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 114; Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 77.

[29] Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 76–77.

[30] Oscar White-Muscarella, *Ladders to Heaven: Art Treasures from Lands of the Bible* (Ontario: McClelland & Stewart 1981), 114, 198–99.

[31] James G. Macqueen, *The Hittites and their Contemporaries in Asia Minor* (London: Thames & Hudson 1996), 145.

[32] Lichtheim, *AEL* 1:227. See Anson F. Rainey, "Sinuhe's World," in Aren M. Maeir and Pierre de Miroschedji, eds., *"I Will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times": Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (2 vols.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns 2006), 1:277–99; John Baines, "Interpreting Sinuhe," *JEA* 68 (1982): 31–44; Nili Shupak, "Ancient Egyptian Literature," in Zipora Talshir, ed., *The Literature of the Hebrew Bible: Introductions and Studies* (2 vols.; Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2011), 2:618 (Hebrew).

[33] Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 78.

Further perusal of the Egyptian evidence suggests that dogs were regarded as luxury items. During the reign of Hatshepsut (1479–1458), they were considered to be exotic, being imported from Punt in the region of Somalia.[34] The tributes paid to Rameses II (1279–1225) by the southern kingdoms included a dog, the canine also reaching Egypt from Nubia and Libya—and possibly western Asia, as part either of tribute, plunder, or trade.[35]

Canine burial—an indication of the esteem with which dogs were viewed—is attested as early as the pre-dynastic period.[36] A coffin dating to the Eleventh Dynasty contained a dog, others discovered decorated with a drawing of the deceased's hound.[37] We know of an embalmed dog from the period of the New Kingdom—a custom that became prevalent during the Late Kingdom.[38] One of the pyramid inscriptions discovered in a Fifth-Dynasty Giza describes the intimacy between the king and his dog: "The dog which was the guard of His Majesty. Abuwtiyuw [*'bwtyw*] is his name. His Majesty ordered that he be buried (ceremonially), that he be given a coffin from the royal treasury, fine linen in great quantity, (and) incense. His Majesty (also) gave perfumed ointment, and (ordered) that a tomb be built for him by the gangs of masons. His Majesty did this for him in order that he (the dog) might be honored."[39] A similar Egyptian tradition from the Persian period is cited by Herodotus: "And in whatever houses a cat has died by a natural death, all those who dwell in this house shave their eyebrows only, but those in whose houses a dog has died shave their whole body and also

[34] *ARE* II §256. For the wall painting at Deir al-Bahari, see Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 199.
[35] *ARE* III §475; Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 77, 203.
[36] Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 77.
[37] Angela M.J. Tooley, "Coffin of a Dog from Beni Hasan," *JEA* 74 (1988):207–11.
[38] Clutton-Brock, *Animals as Domesticates*, 58–59.
[39] Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 77. For mourning over a household pet, see Stephens and Hill, "The Loss of Animal Companions;" 189-210; Lynn A. Planchon et al., "Death of Companion Cat or Dog and Human Bereavement: Psychological Variables," *Society and Animals* 10 (2002): 93–105; Shir-lee Shani, "Tahalikh ha-evel ve-ovdan hayot mehmad [The Process of Mourning and Loss of a Pet]," *Animals and Society* 27 (2005): 37–45, esp. 45 (Hebrew).

their head. The cats when they are dead are carried away to sacred buildings in the city of Bubastis, where after being embalmed they are buried; but the dogs they bury each people in their own city in sacred tombs" (*Hist*. 2.67 [Macaulay]).[40]

Dogs were buried alongside their masters—wrapped in matting or even placed a special coffin with spices and fine linen—in Egypt during the Hellenistic period, most commonly in a Roman environment.[41] Such "joint burials" are also attested in Hatti, where numerous interment plots have been discovered that also contain canine bones.[42] The Greeks, Zoroastrians and Aztecs also practiced the same custom.[43] According to Aztec belief, the dog digs a hole and brings the human being holding its tail to the world of the dead.[44] In Polynesia, the spirit of a dog buried next to a child was believed to protect it in the next world.[45] The canines buried with their masters thus appear to have served as a type of "escort" or guide to the next world.[46]

The affection exhibited towards dogs in Egypt is also reflected in the common custom of giving them names, these sometimes being inscribed on their collar, as attested by various statues—the owners appearing to have

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[40] http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hh/hh1190.htm. For Herodotus' historical trustworthiness, see Benjamin Shimron, *Herodotus and the Beginning of Historiography* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1990), 143 (Hebrew); David Asheri, *A Possession for All Time: Greek Historians and History Writing in Greece and Rome* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2004), 48–49 (Hebrew).

[41] Bilik and Beinart, "Dog," 111–12; Brewer, Redford, and Redford, *Domestic Plants and Animals*, 118; Wapnish and Hesse, "Dogs," 166; Rosalind Janssen and Jack J. Janssen, *Egyptian Household Animals* (Aylesbury: Shire, 1989), 9–11; Clutton-Brock, *Animals as Domesticates*, 59–59. Canine burial is also evidenced at several sites in Roman Britain: see Lobell and Powell, "More than Man's Best Friend," 31.

[42] Macqeen, *The Hittites and their Contemporaries in Asia Minor*, 134.

[43] Leslie Preston Day, "Dog Burials in the Greek World," *AJA* 88 (1984):21–27; Sophia Menache, "Dogs and Human Beings: A Story of Friendship," *Society and Animals* 6 (1998): 67–86, esp. 73; Schwartz, "Dogs in Jewish Society," 253.

[44] Lobell and Powell, "More than Man's Best Friend," 34–36.

[45] Miklósi, *Dog: Behaviour, Evolution, and Cognition*, 50.

[46] Osborn and Osbornová, *The Mammals of Ancient Egypt*, 67. For this custom in medieval Europe, see Menache, "Dogs and Human Beings," 79. It thus appears to have been prevalent in various cultures across diverse time periods see Miklósi, *Dog: Behaviour, Evolution, and Cognition*, 48.

kept the collars in commemoration of their pet.[47] We know of around eighty canine names in use in ancient Egypt—including Blacky, Black, Good Hunter, Faithful, Brave, North Wind, Antelope, and Catcher. On other occasions, dogs were referred to by ordinal numbers—Fifth, Sixth, etc. Some of the names are foreign—Libyan or Nubian—in origin. One—Iuiu ("Barker")—is onomatopoeic.[48] On rare occasions, dogs also bore human names.[49] The practice of giving names to dogs is also known in Mesopotamia, where we know of the names Enemy-Catcher and Enemy-Biter.[50] Within the classical world, Xenophon (*On Hunting*, 7) records an impressive list of names, stressing that these should ideally be concise and clear—and providing forty-six recommendations.[51] The Roman poet Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 3.204–252) informs us of the names of the dogs who belonged to Actaeon, the hunter who was transformed into a stag and finally killed by his own hounds.[52]

The rearing of dogs was equally prevalent in Mesopotamia. Canine remains have been discovered in sites around Sumer dating to the fourth and third millennia BCE.[53] Herodotus writes that this custom was practiced on a large scale, stating that the Babylonian governor of Arbela owned such a vast number of hunting dogs, "that four large villages in the plain, being free from other contributions, had been appointed to provide food for the hounds" (*Hist*. 1.192). Some scholars contend that the Israelite kings similarly kept dogs on a royal scale.[54]

The close bond between canines and humans is also indicated by the well-known phenomenon of feeding them at or under the table—a custom

[47] Borowski, *Every Living Thing*, 136; Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 78. This observance is still practiced in modern-day America: see Stephens and Hill, "The Loss of Animal Companions," 193.
[48] Brewer, Redford, and Redford, *Domestic Plants and Animals*, 118; Janssen and Janssen, *Egyptian Household Animals*, 9–11.
[49] Houlihan, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, 77.
[50] Bilik and Beinart, "Dog," 112. For this practice in pre-Islamic Arab cultures, see Menache, "Dogs and Human Beings," 75.
[51] http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/x/xenophon/x5hu/complete.html.
[52] http://classics.mit.edu/Ovid/metam.3.third.html.
[53] Susan Pollock, *Ancient Mesopotamia: The Eden that Never Was* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 83, 106–7, 134.
[54] Joshua Schwartz, "Dogs, 'Water' and Wall," *SJOT* 14 (2000): 101–16, esp. 115.

that appears to confirm the fact that they were kept as pets.[55] The Egyptian *Instruction of Amenemope* tells us: "A dog's food is from his master; it barks to him who gives it."[56] A painting dating from the Eighteenth Dynasty depicts a dog and a monkey lying under their master's throne. The Ugarit archives similarly contain a reference to the dog who "wags its tail under the table."[57] Frequently, however, this position is said to indicate inferiority. Thus, for example, Adoni-bezeq, king of Jerusalem—defeated during the Israelites' settlement of Canaan—affirms his former status by telling his captors: "'Seventy kings, with thumbs and big toes cut off, used to pick up scraps under my table'" (Judg 1:7).[58] According to Homer in the *Odyssey*, "… hounds crowd round their master when they see him coming from dinner—for they know he will bring them something" (10.216–17 [Butler]), while in the *Iliad* they eat from Priam's table: "… in the end fierce hounds will tear me in pieces at my own gates after someone has beaten the life out of my body with sword or spear-hounds that I myself reared and fed at my own table to guard my gates, but who will yet lap my blood and then lie all distraught at my doors" (22.69 [Butler]).[59] A similar picture is found on painted vases that show dogs waiting to be fed under the table.[60] In a later period, the Gospels also attest to this practice. The Syro-Phoenician counters Jesus' reluctance to heal her daughter with the claim: "Yes, Lord, *but* even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs" (Mark 7:28 [NASB]).[61]

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[55] George Soper Cansdale, *Animals of Bible Lands* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1970), 123.
[56] Lichtheim, *AEL* 1:161; Shupak, "Ancient Egyptian Literature," 641–46.
[57] Osborn and Osbornová, *The Mammals of Ancient Egypt*, 63; RS24.258; CAT 1.114: 4–6. See *KTU*, 133.
[58] See Robert Gordon Boling, *Judges: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* AB (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 50, 55; Yairah Amit, *Judges: Introduction and Commentary*, Mikra Leyisra'el (Tel Aviv and Jerusalem: Am Oved Publishers and the Magnes Press, 1999), 33 (Hebrew). Quotations from the Hebrew Bible are taken from the NJPS.
[59] http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.10.x.html;
http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/iliad.22.xxii.html.
[60] Menache, "Dogs in Classical Tradition," 55.
[61] See Samuel Tobias Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav), 249.

This brief survey indicates that a close bond existed between the ancients and their canine companions, the latter being loved, nurtured, and treated with respect by their owners.

3. The dog in human service in the ancient Near East

One of the primary canine functions was guarding. The watchdog is adduced in early Sumerian proverbs, and is also depicted as guarding Pharaoh in Egyptian sources.[62] Isaiah likens the nation's failed leaders to "dumb dogs that cannot bark; they lie sprawling, they love to drowse. Moreover, the dogs are greedy; they never know satiety" (Isa 56:10–11a).[63] According to Schwartz, it is quite likely that the kings of Judah and Israel kept guard dogs.[64] Discoveries in Mesopotamia have yielded reliefs of dogs on gates and cornerstones that functioned as guards, with dogs also protecting their owners in their houses and yards.[65] A late Egyptian source tells us: "A barking domestic dog is the one who causes his master to be safe. His biting is that which is de-[-spised(?) …] … at the gate (?) of the house of his lord, being forgetful of the respect due him, he is in everybody's eye a thing which makes enmity."[66]

In the later classical period, Socrates also adduces the similarity between humans and canines with respect to guarding:

> 'Is not the noble youth very like a well-bred dog in respect of guarding and watching?' 'What do you mean?' 'I mean that both of them ought to be quick to see, and swift to overtake the enemy when they see him; and strong too if, when they have caught him, they have to fight

[62] Bendt Alster, *Proverbs of Ancient Sumer: The World's Earliest Proverb Collections* (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press 1997), 136, 139; Botterweck, "Keleb," 148.
[63] See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, AB (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 144; Yair Hoffman, *Isaiah* (Tel Aviv: Davidson-Ati, 1994), 256 (Hebrew); Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Interpretation and Commentary,* Mikra Leyisra'el (Tel Aviv and Jerusalem: Am Oved Pablishers and the Magnes Press, 2008), 2:414–15 (Hebrew).
[64] Schwartz, "Dogs, 'Water' and Wall," 115.
[65] Bilik and Beinart, "Dog," 111.
[66] Richard Lewis Jasnow, *A Late Period Hieratic Wisdom Text: (Brooklyn 47.218.135)* (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1992), 75 (6:8).

> with him.' 'All these qualities, he replied, will certainly be required by them.' 'Well, and your guardian must be brave if he is to fight well?' 'Certainly.' 'And is he likely to be brave who has no spirit, whether horse or dog or any other animal? Have you never observed how invincible and unconquerable is spirit and how the presence of it makes the soul of any creature to be absolutely fearless and indomitable?' 'I have.' 'Then now we have a clear notion of the bodily qualities which are required in the guardian'" (Plato, *Republic* 2:375a [Jowett]).[67]

We also know of the Assyrian custom of burying dog figurines beneath the threshold of the house to ward off evil canine spirits—the dog's sophisticated sense of orientation and smell possibly leading the ancients to ascribe to it the ability to discern spirits.[68]

Dogs served as faithful hunting partners in Hatti, Assyria, and Ugarit.[69] In Egypt, they performed this role primarily in the sub-Saharan savannas.[70] Hunting dogs appear to have been used from as early as the First Dynasty (from the beginning of the third millennium BCE)—primarily the spotted type. Later visual representations—from the reign of Amenhotep III (1390–1352)—demonstrate that a different breed has already appeared by that period.[71] Later Egyptian art indicates that Tutankhamun used dogs for hunting and fighting alike.[72]

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[67] http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.3.ii.html.

[68] Bodenheimer, *Animal and Man in Bible Lands*, 185; Alec Basson, "Dog Imagery in Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East," *Journal for Semitics* 15 (2006): 92–106, esp. 98. For the latter claim, see Rudolphina Menzel, "The Domestic Dog," *Encyclopedia Hebraica* 20:818 (Hebrew).

[69] See Collins, "The Puppy in Hittite Ritual," 211; Itamar Singer, *The Hittites and Their Civilization* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2009), 252 (Hebrew); *KTU*, 39; Gregorio del Olmo Lete, Joaquín Sanmartín, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 439. For color representations of hunting dogs on gilded plates, see *ANEP* 56, 270; *UNP* 16.

[70] Houlihan, "Canines," 229.

[71] Strouhal, *Life of the Ancient Egyptians*, 198; Botterweck, "Keleb," 148; Osborn and Osbornová, *The Mammals of Ancient Egypt*, 67.

[72] Osborn and Osbornová, *The Mammals of Ancient Egypt*, 60, 271; Basson, "Dog Imagery in Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East," 98. For fighting dogs, see Aaron Skabelund, "Breeding Racism: The Imperial Battlefields of the 'German' Shepherd Dog," *Society and*

Canines also frequently served as the shepherd's faithful friend, greatly respected for their skills. This role is attested in the Sumerian sapiential literature.[73] The Sumerian shepherd-god Tammuz is represented as having such a dog.[74] Job similarly belittles the young upstarts who mock him by impugning their fathers: "But now those younger than I deride me, [men] whose fathers I would have disdained to put among my sheep dogs" (Job 30:1).[75] Hunting dogs are known in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Greece.[76] The importance attributed to them in Hatti is reflected in the judicial field. One legal clause thus reads: "If anyone strikes the dog of herdsman a lethal blow, he shall pay 20 shekels of silver. He shall look to his house for it."[77] The amount of the fine is indicative of the sheepdog's value—the fine for causing the death of a yard/outside dog, in contrast, being a single shekel.

We have thus adduced the three primary roles the dog served in the ancient Near East: guarding, hunting, and herding. All three functions gained them respect and affection.

4. Canine subjection and loyalty to their masters

The strong bond between humans and dogs was grounded to a large extent on the latter's faithful nature. In a fragmentary letter from Nabû-nāṣir (747–734 BCE), the Assyrian official stresses his loyalty to his master by comparing

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Animals 16 (2008): 354–71; Tamar Meri, "Forgotten Heroes: Dogs in the Wars of Man," *Animals and Society* 41 (2010): 5–14 (Hebrew). For hunting dogs in Mycenae, see Borowski, *Every Living Thing*, 135–36. For the Greek practice, cf. *b. ʿAbod. Zar*. 18b; *b. Hul*. 60b.

[73] Alster, *Proverbs of Ancient Sumer*, 129.

[74] Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps that once …: Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 35; Shin Shifra and Jacob Klein, *In Those Distant Days: Anthology of Mesopotamian Literature in Hebrew* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishers, 1996), 381 (Hebrew). For the god Tammuz, see Bendt Alster, "Tammuz," *DDD*, 828–29.

[75] See Marvin H. Pope, *Job: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, AB (New York: Doubleday 1965), 191; Jacob Klein, *The Book of Job* (Tel Aviv: Divrey Hayamim, 2007), 161 (Hebrew); Yair Hoffman, *A Blemished Perfection: The Book of Job in Context* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 100.

[76] Houlihan, "Canines," 229; Brewer, Redford, and Redford, *Domestic Plants and Animals*, 118; Bilik and Beinart, "Dog," 110; Menache, "Dogs in Classical Tradition," 55.

[77] See Martha T. Roth, *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 228; Meir Malul, *Law Collections and Other Legal Compilations from the Ancient Near East* (Haifa: Pardes, 2010), 245 (Hebrew).

himself to a sheepdog: "Even a dog … with its shepherd."[78] The metaphor also appears in an Assyrian lament over the death of the shepherd-god Dumuzi. Here, Dumuzi himself is likened to one of his sheepdogs: "The dog has been killed at the side of our sheep."[79] The relationship between courtier and king was frequently likened to that between a dog and his master. Thus, for example, Nabû-balāssu-iqbi—a Babylonian official—wrote to his sovereign Esarhaddon: "[From] the very beginning I have been a dog who loves [the house of] his[lord]."[80] Bēl-ibni, an official serving in the region of Elam, wrote in a similar vein to Ashurbanipal: "... Just as the dog loves [his master, when (the master) says]: 'Do not come near the palace.'"[81] These two sources explicitly delineating the dog's affection for his master are unparalleled elsewhere.

A third-millennium Sumerian proverb adduces canine faithfulness: "The dog knows the man who loves him."[82] Another says: "(The demon) Fate is a vicious (?) dog (who) makes one walk behind him."[83] In the pessimistic Mesopotamian sapiential work known as *A Dialogue between a Man and His Servant*—apparently composed in the seventh century BCE—the slave advises his master: "Train your god to follow you around like a dog."[84] According to an Egyptian source, the servant is expected to demonstrate the faithfulness of the dog: "Do not make for yourself a master and a friend, lest you become as a dog who has no master and you perish between them."[85] The Babylonian Talmud records a dictum delivered by R. Eleazar in which he likens the way in which transgression cleaves to a person to the bond between a dog and his master: "It attaches itself to him like a dog; as it is said: *He hearkened not unto*

[78] *ABL* 1176:11; *SAA* X, no. 307:245.
[79] *STT* 360:2, 5; *SAA* III, no. 16:39; Shifra and Klein, *In Those Distant Days*, 381.
[80] *ABL* 717:9–10; *SAA* XVIII, no. 182:150.
[81] *ABL* 281:29–30.
[82] Alster, *Proverbs of Ancient Sumer*, 136.
[83] Edmund I. Gordon, *Sumerian Proverbs: Glimpses of Everyday Life in Ancient Mesopotamia* (New York: Greenwood, 1968), 187 (no. 2.14); Shifra and Klein, *In Those Distant Days*, 532.
[84] *ANET*, 601; Benjamin R. Foster, *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 1993), 2:816–17.
[85] Jasnow, *A Late Period Hieratic Wisdom Text*, 95 (7:5).

her, to lie by her, or to be with her [Gen 39:10]—to lie by her in this world, or to be with her in the world to come" (*b. Sotah* 3b).

The dog's loving and faithful nature made it a symbol of loyalty as early as the second millennium in Egypt and Mesopotamia alike.[86] A similar motif appears in the fourteenth-century BCE El-Amarna archive.[87] Abdi-Ashirta, the ruler of Amurru, for example, presents himself to Amenhotep III in the following terms: "As I am a servant of the king and a dog of his house."[88] Similar descriptions occur in the Lachish letters and those preserved in the Neo-Assyrian archive.[89] This usage appears to lie behind the adoption of "Kalab" as a personal name in the lands of the Bible—serving primarily as part of a theophoric name designating the bearer's subjection and loyalty to the god in question.[90] Alternatively, it is regarded as deriving from the attribution of canines to nations worshiping idols.[91]

The dog's loyalty to his master is also attested in numerous classical sources.[92] Pliny the Elder devotes a whole chapter to "The qualities of the dog: examples of its attachment to his master; nations that have kept dogs for the purposes of war" in his *Natural History* (8.61) which includes numerous incidents of dogs defending their master and refusing to leave him even after his death. The most striking instance is perhaps in the *Odyssey*, where

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[86] Lichtheim, *AEL* 1:230; K. Balkan, *Letter of King Anum-Hirbi of Mama to King Warshama of Kanish* (Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basmevi, 1957), 6, 8 (8–14).

[87] Idan Breier, "The Dog as an Image in the El-Amarna Letters," in Michael Heltzer and Meir Malul, eds., *Teshûrôt LaAvishur: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East, in Hebrew and Semitic Languages. Festschrift Presented to Prof. Yitzhak Avishur on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (Tel Aviv: The Archaeological Institute, 2004), 169–78, esp. 176–77.

[88] EA 60:6–7; cf. 61:3. See William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 32–33.

[89] *ABL* 67:6746: '10–'11; *SAA* XIII, no. 102 83; *ABL* 435:11–13; *SAA* X, no. 160, 198; *ABL* El-Amarna Letter 2:3; cf. 5:3–4; 6:2–3. See *COS* 3:78–81.

[90] Idan Breier, "The Element '*klb*' ('Dog') in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Names," in Shmuel Vargon et al., eds., *Studies in Bible and Exegesis* 9 (Moshe Garsiel Festschrift; Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2009), 329–48 (Hebrew).

[91] Martin H. Manser, ed., "Dog," *The Hodder Dictionary of Bible Themes* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997), 145; Basson, "Dog Imagery in Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East," 99.

[92] http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0137%3Abook%3D8%3Achapter%3D61. See Menache, "Dogs in the Classical Tradition", 54–55.

Odysseus' dog identifies his beloved master when he returns after twenty long years of adventuring:

As they were thus talking, a dog that had been lying asleep raised his head and pricked up his ears. This was Argos, whom Ulysses had bred before setting out for Troy, but he had never had any work out of him. In the old days he used to be taken out by the young men when they went hunting wild goats, or deer, or hares, but now that his master was gone he was lying neglected on the heaps of mule and cow dung that lay in front of the stable doors till the men should come and draw it away to manure the great close; and he was full of fleas. As soon as he saw Ulysses standing there, he dropped his ears and wagged his tail, but he could not get close up to his master. When Ulysses saw the dog on the other side of the yard, dashed a tear from his eyes without Eumaeus seeing it, and said: 'Eumaeus, what a noble hound that is over yonder on the manure heap: his build is splendid; is he as fine a fellow as he looks, or is he only one of those dogs that come begging about a table, and are kept merely for show?' 'This hound,' answered Eumaeus, 'belonged to him who has died in a far country. If he were what he was when Ulysses left for Troy, he would soon show you what he could do. There was not a wild beast in the forest that could get away from him when he was once on its tracks'" (17.300–327).

In like vein, Plutarch records that: "It is reported that Xanthippus, the father of Pericles, had a dog that would not endure to stay behind, but leaped into the sea, and swam along by the galley's side till he came to the island of Salamis, where he fainted away and died, and that spot in the island, which is still called the Dog's Grave, is said to be his" (*Them*. 10 [Dryden]).[93]

Hence we understand that the dog was regarded as subjecting himself to human authority and displaying absolute loyalty to his master. This trait turned him into the symbol of faithfulness in ancient literature.

[93] http://classics.mit.edu/Plutarch/themisto.html. For this theme in medieval Islam, see Menache, "Dogs and Human Beings," 70, 76.

5. Dogs and medicine in the ancient world

In Mesopotamia, dogs are linked with the gods of healing, such as Gula of Isin (Ninisinna) and Ninkarrak of Sipar. The former was the mother of Damu—an incarnation of Dammuzi, the shepherd-god, who was also associated with fertility. Damu's descent into Sheol and ascent symbolizing death and resurrection, he was thus linked with healing.[94] Excavations at a tel dating to ca. 1000 BCE at Isin next to a temple devoted to Gula—named the "House of the Dog" (E_2 UR-GI_7-RA)—revealed the remains of dogs and puppies.[95] A relief from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I of Babylon shows Gula standing by a dog.[96] Two dogs figurines—one gold, one bronze—were found underneath a temple dedicated to her from the days of Nebuchadnezzar II.[97] A Roman-era temple to the same goddess in southern Mesopotamia, similarly known as the "House of the Dog," contained thirty-three canine graves.[98] A Neo-Assyrian source tells us that if a person touched Gula's dog, he was purified: "If a man goes to the temple of his god, and if he touches … (?), he is clean (again?); likewise if he touches the dog of Gula, he is clean (again?)."[99] The personal name *Mūrān-^{d}Gula* ("Gula's Puppy") in use in Mesopotamia points to the importance of this goddess in the region.[100]

Recently, a text from the archive preserved in the Eanna Temple in Uruk, where Gula was worshiped, has been published. Dated to the sixteenth year of the Babylonian king Nabonidus, it speaks of a trial in which a servant of a top-ranking official in the temple who had killed a puppy—according to his testimony, unwittingly. The accused admits to the deed before a wide panel of judges in the following words:

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[94] Shifra and Klein, *In Those Distant Days*, 613, n. 4.
[95] Wapnish and Hesse, "Dogs," 166; idem, "Pampered Pooches or Plain Pariahs?," 69.
[96] *ANEP* 176, 311.
[97] Basson, "Dog Imagery in Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East," 99.
[98] Wapnish and Hesse, "Pampered Pooches or Plain Pariahs?," 69.
[99] Lawrence E. Stager, "Why Were Hundreds of Dogs Buried at Ashkelon?," *BAR* 17/3 (1991): 26–42, esp. 39.
[100] Botterweck, "Keleb," 152.

> On the 22nd day of the [4th] month in the 16th year of Nabonidus I set there on […], and a big and small dog put themselves in front of me; after the big dog snatched a piece of bread from me I grabbed a stick (speaking by myself) thus: 'I want to beat the big dog.' But the big dog jumped away, and I hit the puppy instead; and because of the blow he was dead." The servant's wife—present when the incident occurred—added her testimony: "In my presence, when A hit the puppy: because of the blow he dealt him, he [i.e., the puppy] was dead.[101]

We have no record of the fate the accused suffered. In contrast to this case, according to the Hittite tradition, dogs were expelled from the temple.[102] A similar attitude is exhibited in the Qumran literature, while in Greece dogs were forbidden entry to the Acropolis in Athens and the temples in Delos—despite serving as watchdogs.[103] In some cultures, the dog served as a symbol of impurity.[104]

The sources adduced herein demonstrate the association between dogs and healing in the ancient world. Some scholars link this connection to the enormous canine cemetery—over 1,200 graves—discovered at Ashkelon and dated to the Persian period (the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century BCE).[105] During this time, the local populace of Ashkelon was primarily Philistine and Judaean, mixed with some Phoenician and Greek elements and a number of Persians and Egyptians.[106] Because the dogs do not appear to have suffered a violent death, some scholars surmise that the

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[101] Cornelia Wunsch, "Narrative in Neo-Babylonian Trial Documents," in Klaus-Peter Adam, Friedrich Avemarie and Nili Wazana, eds., *Law and Narrative in the Bible and in Neighboring Ancient Cultures* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 28.

[102] Singer, *The Hittites and Their Civilization*, 178.

[103] See Elisha Qimron and John Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4. V: Miqṣat Ma'ase Ha-Torah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 52–53; Menache, "Dogs: God's Worst Enemies?," 27; idem, "Dogs and Human Beings," 69.

[104] Udo Becker, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Symbols* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 84–85.

[105] Seven graves were also discovered at Ashdod and one at Tel-Kasila; see Stager, "Why Were Hundreds of Dogs Buried at Ashkelon?"

[106] Lawrence Stager and Douglas Esse, "Ashkelon Excavations: The Leon Levy Expedition," in Naftali Arbel, ed., *Ashqelon 4000 and Forty More Years* (2 vols.; Ashqelon: The Ashkelon Heritage Association, 1990), 1:50–52 (Hebrew).

presence of the cemetery reflects the canine link with healing.[107] According to Adler-Goodfriend, dogs served a therapeutic role in the region of Eretz Israel.[108] Thus, for example, one of the healing potions used in Hatti was made of barley-flour dough and dog excrement.[109]

Canine curative capacities were also known in the pre-classical Greek world.[110] The idea that dogs could help heal people may have derived, *inter alia*, from the belief in the salving and restorative powers of licking—known already in Hatti and Babylon.[111] Licking by dogs is also found in later periods, for example, in the Gospels: "Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the *crumbs* which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores" (Luke 16:19–21 [NASB]).[112] According to Pliny the Elder, dogs were a kind of "walking pharmacy," frequently killed for healing purposes (*Nat*. 29–30). The Babylonian Talmud states that part of a remedy for tertian fever included tying "seven hairs from the beard of an old dog" with other ingredients "in the nape of the neck with a white twisted thread" (b. Šabb. 67a). The Mishna (Yoma 8:6) reflects a popular belief that a person who was bitten by a mad dog could be cured by eating a piece of a the lobe of dog's liver.[113] Modern research has revealed that the dog is able to identify certain tumorous

[107] Ibid., 52; Stager, "Why Were Hundreds of Dogs Buried at Ashkelon?," 39–42. For a contrary view, see Wapnish and Hesse, "Pampered Pooches or Plain Pariahs?"
[108] Elaine Adler-Goodfriend, "Could *Keleb* in Deuteronomy 23:19 Actually Refer to a Canine?," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, ed. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 392–97.
[109] Collins, 'The Puppy in Hittite Ritual," 216.
[110] Stager, "Why Were Hundreds of Dogs Buried at Ashkelon?," 52.
[111] Botterweck, "Keleb," 149; Collins, "The Puppy in Hittite Ritual," 214–15.
[112] Menache, "Dogs and Human Beings," 78. For this practice in later medieval Europe, see John D. Davis, *Davis Dictionary of the Bible* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1975), 188.
[113] Jacob Neusner, *The Mishna: A New Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 278.

growths that develop in the human body and warn of imminent epileptic attacks.[114]

In this context, some scholars interpret the verse "You shall not bring the fee of a whore or the pay of a dog into the house of the LORD your God in fulfillment of any vow, for both are abhorrent to the LORD your God" (Deut 23:19) as a reference to canine healing properties—the "pay of a dog" alluding to the cost of the remedy derived from use of his bodily parts.[115] Other scholars propose alternative exegeses, including the idea that the word "dog" signifies "prostitution" of some kind.[116]

This brief review indicates that the dog was regarded as possessing medicinal properties in the ancient world. This topic is now being examined by increasing numbers of scholars.

Conclusion

We began our discussion with the fact that the dog appears to have been the first wild animal to have been domesticated. The human/canine relationship is unique, grounded in mutual aid and affection. The ancient sources from the lands of the Bible reveal that this reciprocity was strengthened by the various roles the dog played in human life—an attitude paralleled in the classical world and the Second Temple and mishnaic and talmudic periods. The dog is regarded as his master's faithful companion, assisting him in a variety of tasks—as well as providing recreational pleasure. The close bond between the two species is reflected in the fact that dogs were given human names, enjoyed legal defense, and buried honorably, frequently by their owner's side. In addition to their principal tasks of guarding, hunting, and

[114] Levi, "Dogs and Cats," 48–49.
[115] Stager, "Why Were Hundreds of Dogs Buried at Ashkelon?," 42; Adler-Goodfriend, "Could *Keleb* in Deuteronomy 23:19 Actually Refer to a Canine?," 392–97.
[116] See Edwin Firmage, "Dogs," *ABD* 6:1144; Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, "Kelev," in *New International Dictionary of The Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Pub House, 1997), 640; Moshe Simon-Shoshan, "Ain't Nothing but a Hound Dog? The Meaning of the Noun Dog *klb* in Northwest Semitic Languages in Light of BT Rosh Hashanah 4A," in *A Common Cultural Heritage: Studies on Mesopotamian and the Biblical World in Honor of Barry L. Eichler,* ed. Grant Frame et al. (Bethesda, Md : CDL Press, 2011), 177–94.

herding, they also served as pets. Their usefulness was not confined to their active help, however, but also manifested in their healing properties.