

Beetle offers clue to ancient pest control

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Israeli researchers said an ancient beetle provides clues to how the Bible's Joseph the Dreamer was able to keep the people of Egypt from starving.

Bar-Ilan University said the burnt remains of a beetle known as the Lesser Grain Borer, were found in a grain of wheat that dates back 3,500 years, Haaretz newspaper reported Monday.

The researchers said Joseph may have been aware of the destructive capabilities of the beetle, which had just arrived in the region. They said he may have been was able to prevent the beetle from destroying all the grain by making sure to isolate the grain of each city in its own jurisdiction and prevent the transfer of batches of grain from one community to another.

Ancient Egyptians might also have used a method by which fine sand is added to the grain so it can scratch the hard covering of the beetle and make it die, the report said.

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