

Literary Patterning in the Plague Narrative

Chart from Kenneth Kitchen, On the Reliability of the Old Testament, 253.

Plague #	Forewarning	Timing	Command Where
1	Yes	"In morning"	Station self
2	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh
3	None	None	None
4	Yes	"In morning"	Station self
5	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh
6	None	None	None
7	Yes	"In morning"	Station self
8	Yes	None	Go to Pharaoh
9	None	None	None
10	Yes	None	None

Pharaoh's "Heart": Two Views

Heavy Heart = Guilty	Hard Heart = Resolute
YHWH co-opts an Egyptian concept expressed in the Book of the Dead where the gods weigh a dead person's heart on a balance against a feather. A heart heavier than the feather is guilty of injustice. YHWH finds Pharaoh guilty by his own standards.	As in Hebrew, the Egyptian concept of a "hard heart" is not cruel but resolute. YHWH inverts the positive Egyptian concept of "stoutheartedness" and shows that Pharaoh's ideals are contrary to YHWH's. Pharaoh fails to define good and evil on YHWH's terms.

	קשׁה (<i>qšh</i>) ≈ hard	ףוחק (ḥzq) ≈ strong	כבד (<i>kbd</i>) ≈ heavy
Commission		4:21 Y > P (future)	
Second Commission	7:3 Y > P (future)		
Staff > Snake		7:13 P (qal)	
Nile > Blood		7:22 P (qal); 'he would not listen'	7:14 P (state; adj); 'he refuses'
Frogs			8:15[11] P > P
Gnats		8:19[15] P (qal); 'he would not listen'	
Flies			8:32[28] P > P
Cattle			9:7 P (state; qal); 'he did not send away the people'
Boils		9:12 Y > P	
Hail		9:35 P (qal)	9:34 P&S > P&S
Locusts		10:20 Y > P	10:1 Y > P&S
Darkness		10:27 Y > P	
Death of Firstborn		11:10 Y > P	
	13:15 when P > P (summary)		
Sea of Reeds		14:4 Y > P (future)	
Sea of Reeds		14:8 Y > P	
Sea of Reeds		14:17 Y > E (future)	

Pharoah Does it to Himself

It's Vague

God Does It

Pharoah is Described as the Actor