**Anaphora**

Anaphora is a figure of speech that comes from two Greek words, *ana* (“again”) and *pherō* (“to bring or carry”), and it means a “carrying back,” thus, repeating something over again. It occurs when successive sentences or phrases begin with the same word or words, thus calling one’s attention back to what is being emphasized. Here are some examples:

1. Matthew 5:3-11 – The first nine verses of the Sermon on the Mount, known as the Beatitudes, start with the words “Blessed are….” The emphasis here is God’s will for His people to be blessed. The anaphora also invokes a call to action for the listener. God wants His people to be humble and obey Him.
2. Psalm 136 – The first three verses begin with “Give thanks.” Eight verses begin with “to him.” Such a pattern of rhythm and repetition engages the reader in a way that holds their attention and helps them remember.
3. Psalm 13:1-2 – Four times the sentence begins with “How long…?”
4. Psalm 29 – The first two verses begin with “Render to Yahweh.” Then five more verses begin with “Yahweh’s voice.”
5. Psalm 150 – “Praise Yah!” is repeated three times; “Praise him” nine times.
6. Ecclesiastes 3:2-8 – One of the most famous passages of Scripture, each verse begins with “a time to,” (a time to be born, a time to die, …plant, …uproot, …kill, …heal, …tear down, …build up, …weep, …laugh, …mourn, …dance, …cast away, …gather, etc.) inspiring contemplation on the importance of every facet of life.
7. Philippians 2:1 – “Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort from love, if any fellowship based on the spirit, if any compassion or mercy,” The “if” at the beginning of each phrase magnifies the significance of each point.

The repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive clauses may appear redundant at first, but when the figure is understood, the reader can perceive the additional weight and emphasis that is being added to the statements.

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[For anaphora, see E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Originally published by Eyre and Spottiswoode: London, 1898), 199-205.]