**Asterismos**

Asterismos, meaning “indicating,” is the rhetorical term for a word that is used to call attention to what follows. The Greek word *astēr* means “star.” An asterisk or “little star” can be put beside a word in order to mark it as important. Attention-getting words such as “look,” “hey,” or “listen up,” direct the focus of the listener to the point one is about to make. The asterismos is not logically related to the context of the sentence; it is a preface used for the purpose of drawing attention to subsequent words.

The Hebrew word *hinneh* is a demonstrative particle or interjection, literally “lo!” or “behold!” Here are some examples:

1. Genesis 1:31 – “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day”.
2. Genesis 50:18 – “His brothers also went and fell down before his [Joseph’s] face and they said, ‘Behold, we are your servants.’”
3. Isaiah 7:14 – “Therefore the Lord himself will give you all a sign. Behold, the young woman is pregnant and about to bear a son, and you, *young woman,* will call his name Immanuel.”
4. Psalm 133:1 – “Behold, how good and how delightful it is for brothers to live together in unity!”

The Greek words *idou* and *ide* are also used as demonstrative particles to draw our attention to something that is coming next. Translations such as “Look!,” “Behold!,” and “See!” are used idiomatically, and thus would be heard by someone listening as an attention grabber and not a literal command to actually look at something. In some contexts, the asterismos is gentler as in “remember” or “consider.” Here are some examples:

1. Matthew 1:20 – “But while he was thinking about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to favorably accept Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit.” In this verse, the word “behold” is meant to grab one’s attention.
2. Matthew 3:17 – “and behold, a voice *came* out of heaven, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’” “Behold” here emphasizes the solemn proclamation made by God about his Son, Jesus Christ.
3. Matthew 28:7 – “and go quickly and tell his disciples he was raised from the dead. And look, he is going before you into Galilee. You will see him there. Look, I have told you.” The “look” and the “see” emphasize the fact of Jesus’ resurrection and the importance of the message the women are to deliver.
4. Matthew 28:20 – teaching them to obey all that I commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Here “remember” is calling our attention to Jesus’ words in a comforting and encouraging way.

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[For asterismos, see E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Originally published by Eyre and Spottiswoode: London, 1898), 926.]