**Hendiadys**

Hendiadys is a figure of speech that comes from the Greek *heis* (“one”), *dia* (“by”), and *duo* (“two”), thus meaning “one [idea] by means of two [words].” The figure occurs when two words connected by “and” express one single yet more complex idea. For example, “This room is nice and warm;” meaning “nicely warm” or “warm, and *nicely* warm, too.” The words in the phrase “safe and sound” when combined as hendiadys convey something more and slightly different than they do by themselves. Most phrases that combine words with “and” are not a hendiadys. For example, “here and now” is not hendiadys because one word does not necessarily modify the other. Certain criteria must be met for a phrase to qualify as a hendiadys. Below are several criteria to help discern if a phrase is likely a hendiadys.

1. The two words are joined together by the conjunction “and.”
2. The two words must be the same part of speech (i.e., two nouns, two verbs, etc.)
3. If the words are nouns, they will be in the same case.
4. The two terms must not be opposites of each other or opposed in any way.
5. The two terms, not fully synonymous, will together work as a single unit of meaning.
6. The words must be able to have a certain relation to each other; one will indicate a property of the other or be associated with it in some way. For example, in Acts 3:6, when Peter said “silver and gold have I none,” he could not have meant “silvery gold.”
7. The two words must logically fit the context and scope of Scripture.

Sometimes it can be difficult to determine whether a phrase is an actual rhetorical device, simply a necessary grammatical construction of the ancient speaker, or a figure other than hendiadys. Here are a few examples of hendiadys.

1. Genesis 4:4 – “Abel also brought some of the firstborn of his flock and of its fat. Yahweh respected Abel and his offering,”  
     
   Meaning, that Abel brought “the firstlings of his flock, yes — and the fattest ones too,” or “the fattest firstlings of his flock,” with the emphasis on “fattest.”
2. Genesis 19:24 – “Then Yahweh rained on Sodom and on Gomorrah sulfur and fire—coming from Yahweh out of heaven.”  
     
   God rained “burning sulfur” down from heaven. This phrase could also mean “fire and burning sulfur.” The fire and the sulfur were not rained separately upon Sodom and Gomorrah, the sulfur was burning.
3. 2 Chronicles 2:9 – “even to prepare me timber in abundance; for the house that I am about to build will be great and wonderful.”  
     
   The sense is, “wonderfully great,” or “great, yes — and wonderfully great too.”
4. Colossians 2:8 – The Greek literally reads, “through the philosophy and empty deceit.” In this case, the point is not that there is “philosophy” and also “empty deceit,” but rather that the philosophy itself is “empty and deceitful.” Thus, the idea is “See to it that no one takes you captive through empty, deceitful philosophy *that is* according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”
5. 2 Timothy 1:10 – “but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who on the one hand destroyed *the power of* death, and on the other hand brought life and immortality to light through the good news,”  
     
   The hendiadys here means “life, yes, immortal life.” In this verse, the word “life” is being used in its fuller sense. While it does refer to a fulfilled life now, that is its lesser meaning; the greater meaning is that “life” refers to “everlasting life.”

To see more uses of and commentary about figures of speech used in the Bible, use the [REV search tool](http://revisedenglishversion.com/search), and articles on figures of speech can also be found at: [stfi.org/tag/figures/](https://stfi.org/tag/figures/).

[For hendiadys, see E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Originally published by Eyre and Spottiswoode: London, 1898), 657-73.]