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READING THE WORLD AS SCRIPTURE: HUGH OF ST VICTOR'S *DE TRIBUS DIEBUS*

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INTRODUCTION

Hugh of St Victor's *De tribus diebus* is a difficult work to classify. Strictly speaking, it is neither an hexaemeral commentary nor a cosmological treatise, although it bears affinities to both these types of literature. It is not exactly a mystical work either, despite its stated intention of leading the reader through the *visibilia* of creation to the *invisibilia* of the triune God. In some of the surviving manuscripts, it is attached to the *Didascalicon de studio legendi*, and in Migne's *Patrologia latina* it appears as the *liber septimus* of that work.¹ C.H. Buttmer, modern editor of the *Didascalicon*, chose to omit the *De tribus diebus* from his edition, although retaining a somewhat incongruous appendix, the *De tribus rerum subsistentiis*. His decision seems unfortunate. Granted that the *De tribus diebus* is a self-contained treatise that can be read and used as such,² the evidence of the manuscripts should not be ignored. I would suggest that the *De tribus diebus* might best be read, in fact, as a contemplative seventh part of Hugh's six-part work in the *Didascalicon*, if not actually the meditation proposed in the preface and book six, chapter thirteen.³ On these terms, it appears both as an exemplary application of exegetical principles expounded in the treatise *de studio legendi*, and as the completion or conclusion that structurally echoes

the hexaemeron, in which God worked during six "days" but on the seventh blessed and contemplated what he had made.

Hugh's *Didascalicon de studio legendi* is intended as a preparatory guide to the study of Scripture, or exegetical theology. It is a tightly structured work, in six books divisible into two sets of three. The division parallels Hugh's division, in the *De tribus diebus*, of the creation week into two distinct clusters of three days. The first three books of the *Didascalicon* cover the secular arts, in their origin, divisions, and methodology. Book one provides an introduction to philosophy as Hugh understands it, "the wisdom that illumines the human being so that one may know oneself."⁴ The motif of illumination, characteristically Augustinian, may also be read as an allusion to the original illumination at the beginning of creation, where God speaks, saying, "let there be light" (Gen. 1:3). Book one continues through a series of threefold classifications, almost too neatly located in chapters three, six, and nine. The first triad, in chapter three, describes the threefold powers of the soul — vegetative, sentient, and rational — and is borrowed from Boethius' commentary on Porphyry.⁵ The second triad, presented in chapter six, unfolds the distinctions among eternity, perpetuity or duration, and time, and derives from Chalcidius on the *Timaeus*.⁶ Third is Hugh's enumeration in chapter nine of the three "works," namely those of God the Creator, those of nature imitating God, and those of the artificer imitating nature. The next chapter expands somewhat on the definition of nature and then, after a bridging chapter on logic, Hugh begins his famous book two on the arts — theoretical, practical, mechanical and logical.⁷ Book three brings the reader to the content, method, and psychological setting necessary to reading in the arts, or secular literature. Books four to six, finally, treat of the reading of sacred scripture, in terms first of content and then of exegetical method. In book six, Hugh completes his programme of study with a detailed exposition of the threefold interpretation of scripture.

It should be noted that Hugh could as easily have adopted a fourfold as a threefold scheme of exegesis. Although Origen and several of the Latin patristic authors following him, had observed a threefold mode of interpretation — literal, moral, and spiritual — no less an authority than Gregory the Great had expanded Origen's spiritual sense to include the anagogical and the allegorical.⁸ A near contemporary of Hugh, Guibert of Nogent (d. 1127), had stated of the four senses that they constituted:

rules by which every page of scripture turns as if on so many wheels: history speaks of things done; allegory understands one thing by another; tropology is a moral way of speaking . . . and anagogue is the spiritual understanding by which one is led to things above.⁹

Hugh, however, retains a threefold division of the senses into the literal-historical, the allegorical or doctrinal, and the tropological or moral. In so doing, he extends the pattern of triads structuring his work into a framework for interpreting scripture as well as classifying the knowable world. The principle behind such carefully trinitarian composition emerges in his description of the allegorical mode of exegesis. There, he lists eight "sacraments" of scripture, among which the doctrine of the Trinity holds first place. To have grasped, moreover, what is to be believed of the Trinity, is to have acquired the solid foundation necessary for building an allegorical reading of the sacred text.¹⁰

Hugh addresses his reader at some length on the content and method of historical and allegorical reading of scripture. The student is urged to take the time to learn the truth of the historical sense, and of deeds done, before turning to the allegorical mode. He is warned, too, that allegory is for mature minds, and that without sound structural principles, as it were, he risks confusion among the many possible ways of approaching a text. Finally, Hugh brings his reader to the tropological mode, but limits himself to a brief description of its object. It is characterized, he states, by the signification in things rather than words, and carries a moral lesson, since it concerns the "natural justice" from which "positive justice" or morality is born. The "text" to which the tropological mode is applied, however, goes beyond the words and things in scripture and is seen ultimately to be all that God has created:

By contemplating what God has made, we recognize what ought to be done by us. All nature speaks of God, all nature teaches the human being, all nature brings forth reason, and nothing in the universe lacks fecundity.¹¹

From chapters six to thirteen, book six then covers an assortment of what might be called practical points of reading and classification. Hugh gives his reader an account of the distinctions to be made among the "order of books," the "order of narrative," and the "order of exposition." In his presentation of the "order of exposition," or the pattern to be followed by the exegete, Hugh describes yet another triad, that of *littera*, *sensus*, and *sententia*. The order of *littera* aims at no more than correct reading of the text in its basic grammatical or literal sense. The order of *sensus*, on a somewhat profounder level, interprets the idioms and figures of speech frequently found in Old Testament and prophetic texts. The order of *sententia*, finally, resembles the allegorical mode, in that it seeks the doctrinal sense behind apparent absurdities and obscurities in the sacred text.¹² Chapter twelve is Hugh's summary statement of method, by which the mode or method of

reading is defined as division (*partitio*) and investigation: the text must be broken into parts to disclose meaning, and then the meaning of each part must be disclosed by investigation.¹³ Reading, however, is not the whole of exegetical theologizing: it requires completion through meditation. Hugh therefore sums up his work in the *Didascalicon* with a note on its limitations and the need for a separate treatise on meditation:

And now those things which pertain to reading have been explicated as clearly and economically as possible. I refrain from saying anything in the present work, in fact, about the remaining part of doctrine, that is, meditation, because such a topic requires a special treatise, and it is more worthy to remain altogether silent on such matters than to say anything imperfectly . . .¹⁴

The chapter closes, last of all, with an invocation to holy Wisdom, "that it deign to shine forth in our hearts and light up for us its pathways," so as to lead to the eternal and celestial goal.¹⁵

After this, the text of the *Didascalicon* becomes somewhat confusing. Chapter thirteen has all the earmarks of a conclusion — summary, admonition to the reader, promise of future work, and closing prayer — and yet it is followed by two more chapters and an appended note. It is also followed, in some examples, by the *De tribus diebus* as a *liber septimus*. Buttimer argues convincingly for the authenticity of chapters fourteen and fifteen and the *De tribus rerum subsistentiis*, treating them as material provisionally added to the draft of a second redaction of the work.¹⁶ Meanwhile, as I have suggested, it may be useful to extend the scope of the *Didascalicon* to include a seventh book or meditation, thereby giving the *De tribus diebus* its rationale and literary context.

TROPOLOGICAL MEDITATION: THE LITTERA OF CREATION

At the beginning of the *Didascalicon*, Hugh invokes the illumination of *sapientia* to be acquired from study of the arts; at what appears to be its conclusion, he invokes the illumination of holy *Sapientia*, which leads the mind into eternal consummation. At the beginning of the *De tribus diebus*, he invokes the *Verbum bonum* and *Vita sapiens*, the good and wise Word and Life by which the world was created. Although the Word itself remains invisible, what is visible was made by it, and by contemplation of the world, the reader may come to perceive the Word that created it. "All nature," as Hugh states in his definition of the tropological mode, "speaks of God," and by contemplating it, the reader comes to moral self-awareness. The *De tribus diebus*, therefore, presents the reader with a meditation on created nature that is also a tropological interpretation of Romans 1:20,

invisibilia enim ipsius a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur. The Romans text provides the rationale; Hugh's meditation proceeds to analyse the *visibilia* of creation so as to reach a fully instructed perception of the *invisibilia* of the Creator. His investigation, as we shall see, will then return to the moral application of what was learned, or what ought to be done in consequence.

Hugh begins his exploration of the *visibilia* of creation by identifying the *invisibilia Dei* with the divine power, wisdom, and love from which all things proceed, in which all things are established, and through which all things are governed.¹⁷ The three are ineffably one in the divine nature, and cannot entirely be conceived as separated in their operations on creatures. Thus, it is possible to say: "Power creates wisely through goodness. Wisdom governs benignly through power. Goodness preserves powerfully through wisdom."¹⁸ Nevertheless, each of the three *invisibilia Dei* is distinctly manifested by certain aspects or qualities of creatures. The immensity of creatures manifests power, elegance manifests wisdom, and usefulness manifests goodness. Each of these aspects of creation may be further subdivided within a catalogue of created qualities and characteristics:

The immensity of the creature [is found] in multitude and magnitude; multitude [is] in similarities, in differences, in mixtures. Magnitude [is] in bulk and space; bulk [is] in mass and weight. Space is in length, and breadth, and depth, and height. The elegance of creatures is in situation, and motion, and species, and quality. Situation is in composition and order. Order is in place and time and property. Motion is fourfold — local, natural, animal, rational. Local [motion] is forward and backwards, to the right and to the left, up, and down, and around. Natural [motion] is in growth and decay. Animal [motion] is in senses and appetites. Rational [motion] is in deeds and counsels. Species is the visible form which is discerned by the eye, as colours and the shapes of bodies. Quality is an interior property, which is perceived by the other senses, as sweetness of sound by the hearing of ears, sweetness of flavour in the taste of the mouth, fragrance of odour in the olfactory sense of the nostrils, smoothness of the body in the tactile sense of hands. The usefulness of creatures consists in the gratuitous, and the agreeable, and the convenient, and the necessary. The gratuitous is what pleases, the agreeable is what is fitting, the convenient is what is profitable, and the necessary [is] that without which a thing could not be.¹⁹

Having constructed this logical framework for the analysis of created natures and their characteristics, Hugh proceeds to consider each particular aspect named in his catalogue, beginning with the *visibilia* and *invisibilia* of creation (chapters two to fifteen) and ending with contemplation of the *invisibilia* of God (chapters seventeen to twenty-five).

The first series of categories that Hugh considers are those which pertain to or demonstrate divine power. Although the initial act of creation *ex nihilo* is the most conspicuous instance of God's creative power, the existence of vast multitudes of distinctive genera, species, and individuals is a further demonstration of the Creator's *potentia*. Within this multiplicity there are, as well, similarities among individuals of the same species, and differences that distinguish individuals, species, and genera one from another. Moreover, divine power is to be observed in the astonishing mixture of so vast a multitude of variegated creatures.²⁰ Finally, the Creator's power is to be discerned in the magnitude of his works, and especially in massive geographical features like mountains, rivers, meadows, and oceans.²¹

From somewhat cursory remarks on created multitude and magnitude, Hugh moves into a consideration of the created beauty that discloses the light of divine wisdom. Before discussing aspects of this beauty under the headings of situation, motion, species, and quality, Hugh interpolates some personal comments on the value of such study:

Would that I could perceive this [light of divine wisdom] as subtly, describe it as competently, as I am able ardently to love it! For it delights me, because it is exceedingly sweet and joyous to treat of these matters frequently, where sense is edified by reason, and the soul is delighted by sweetness, and affection is excited by the desire to imitate it . . .²²

Contemplation of creatures is, indeed, comparable to the process of learning to read the scriptures, and requires a similar kind of skill in moving from the literal and external to the interior and spiritual:

For the whole sensible world is like a kind of book written by the finger of God — that is, created by divine power — and each particular creature is somewhat like a figure, not invented by human decision, but instituted by the divine will to manifest the invisible things of God's wisdom. But in the same way that some illiterate, if he saw an open book, would notice the figures, but would not comprehend the letters, so also the stupid and "animal man" who "does not perceive the things of God" [1 Cor. 2:14], may see the outward appearance of these visible creatures, but does not understand the reason within. But one who is spiritual is "able also to judge all things," namely in that he considers the beauty of the works externally, [and] inwardly conceives how admirable is the wisdom of the Creator.²³

Failure to read creatures correctly and to discern their spiritual significance, Hugh continues, will surely lead to idolatry and ignorance of God.²⁴ Rightly considered, however, creatures direct human beings toward their Creator.

Returning to his main argument, Hugh proceeds to discuss manifestations of divine wisdom in the situation of creatures. Situation is said to consist in composition and order, or composition and disposition.²⁵ Composition, which pertains to agreeable assembly and firm or solid cohesion, is demonstrated with reference both to the corporeal universe and the human body, in an analogy that is reminiscent of the *homo microcosmos* theme in Eriugena's *Periphyseon*, book four, and in some of the cosmological and hexaemeral works of Honorius Augustodunensis,²⁶ although the term *microcosmos* is not employed by Hugh. An aptly assembled body will be neither too meagre nor too gross in quantity, and will have the qualities of heat, cold, dryness, and moisture in proper proportions. Such composition is found in the structure of the universe as a whole, where contrary elements combine to serve the divine purpose:

What could be more contrary than water and fire? Nevertheless, the prudence of God moderates them in the nature of things in such a way that not only do they not dissolve the bond of fellowship common to both, but also administer vital nourishment to all living things, so that they may subsist.²⁷

Similarly, the human body is composed of various kinds of limbs, but all function together in harmonious and mutual service. Moreover, both the universe and the human body are composed for solid cohesion. In the universe, the heavens encircle and contain all things, while the earth remains firmly fixed in the centre. The earth itself contains tracts of water underground and rivers on the surface, by which the dry interior mass is cemented together and the surface is kept from crumbling apart through lack of moisture. The human body, similarly, is a complex fabric in which tendons bind together the joints of bones, marrow is diffused through the long bones, and veins supply life-giving blood to all parts of the organism. Externally, it is covered and contained by the skin, and internally it is sustained by the rigidity of its bones. Thus, all parts — both of the universe and of the human body — are ordered for durability and the preservation of nature and being.²⁸

From structural composition, Hugh turns to the disposition of things in place and time, noting that divine providence “distributes its causes to each particular place, time, and thing, so the order of things is disturbed in nothing.”²⁹ Each part has its place in the totality — there are the heavens above and the earth below, and in these there are the stars, planets, winds, tempests, and waters, each with their proper place and function. Birds fly in the air; fish swim in the water; different kinds of animals, serpents, reptiles, and worms fill the earth. Each region of the earth appears to be

supplied with some source of wealth, whether in crops or cattle, rare and precious gems, or specialized local products. The effects of providence are seen, moreover, in that the things most necessary to human nature were placed in the more accessible locations, while those which cupidity rather than nature seeks for the sake of their beauty are hidden away in the depths of the earth.³⁰ Finally, the disposition of times pertains to the orderly and useful procession of day and night, spring, summer, winter, and autumn, according to which human activity and rest are regulated.³¹

Proceeding from point to point in his intricate catalogue of created qualities and characteristics, Hugh turns to the order perceived in things according to the congruous disposition of their parts, or to the creatures' intrinsic order. Here again, his principal example is the human body and he adds several new details to the descriptive catalogue in chapter four, where the general structure of the human body was compared to that of the universe.³² Just as the visible creatures of the universe bear an invisible, spiritual meaning, so also the external features of the human body disclose the soul's nature and activity. Thus, the human body is uniform above, but divided in two below, just as reason, or the higher part of the soul, is uniform in its contemplation of invisible things, while the lower part of the soul is divided by concupiscence, which descends from higher things to terrestrial desires. Arms and legs are understood to indicate extension of the soul outward in the intention to act and upward through the affection of desires. Moreover, the five fingers on each hand and five toes on each foot suggest the five senses through which the soul extends itself in action and desire.³³ The instruments of sense perceptions located in the face are understood to be arranged in order of dignity, with vision in the highest place, followed by hearing, smell, and taste. The tactile sense, meanwhile, is distributed over the whole body. In conclusion, Hugh notes how usefully the skeletal structure is placed within the body as a firm support, with flesh over bones to mitigate their hardness and skin over all as a tough protective coat. Finally, the vital organs are placed safely in the middle part of the body, lest they be crushed or collapse.³⁴ Other created bodies, including those of trees, birds, fish, and beasts, are all constructed with a similar care, so that each particular thing has been provided with the protection that its nature requires.

After the fairly extended description of order in corporeal structures, Hugh's treatment of the topic of motion is brief. He lists the types of local motion observable in the cycles of wind and water and in the regular courses of the planets, stars, and sun. "All these," he comments, "are wonderful,

and possible only for God."³⁵ Three further classes of motion are noted as well, although cursorily. Natural motion displays itself in the varieties of vegetal growth, maturation, and decay. Animal motion resides in sense and appetite; it is expressed in animal questings for food and other necessities of the appropriate kind and quantity. Finally, rational motion resides in deeds and counsel, by which all human achievements are produced.³⁶

Continuing to guide the reader through his catalogue of creatures, Hugh dwells lovingly and at length on the category of *species*, or external beauty. This external beauty or visible form is perceived in the shapes — large, small, rare, beautiful, or otherwise — and variegated colour of things. First, therefore, Hugh discusses the marvels of created shapes, some of which deserve admiration for their enormous size, while others are wonderfully small:

Try to decide, then, which you admire the most — the teeth of a boar, or those of the bookworm; the wings of the gryphon, or those of the gnat? The head of a horse, or that of a locust? The limbs of an elephant, or those of a fly? The snout of a pig, or that of a mosquito? The eagle, or the ant? The lion, or the flea? The tiger, or the tortoise? There you marvel at magnitude, here you are amazed at smallness. Enormous wisdom created a small body — great wisdom, which no negligence subverts. To those [creatures] it gave eyes, which the eye can scarcely perceive, and in such tiny bodies it most amply distributed to every part the features congruent with their natures, so that you may see nothing lacking in the smallest of all of them, which nature formed in the largest.³⁷

Hugh's eloquence, at first glance, suggests enthusiastic observation of nature. A closer reading shows that his world of visible creatures is literary, and that his reader will find Hugh's instructive zoo not in the countryside around St Victor but in the pages of the *Physiologus*. Indeed, the most instructive, because most marvellous, may be the creatures so rare as to be accessible only in texts. Some are rare because they seldom occur to human observation, while others are regarded as rarities because they represent a distinctive purity or perfection according to the standards of their breed or kind. Still others are made rare by their natural habitat, in remote and hidden regions of the earth. All this, it seems to Hugh, must be decreed by divine providence, either for the protection of human life from remote but also noxious animal species, or as a test of the human cupidity that seeks out precious objects, or as an incentive, even, for human slowness of spirit to learn wonder at God's works. Finally, by placing both good and harmful creatures as if at a distance from human grasp, divine providence has inscribed a moral lesson in the created order:

[It was done] so that one may notice, with what zeal one ought to avoid eternal evil and seek eternal good, if one sustains such great labours for the sake of attaining these temporal goods, and avoiding [these temporal] evils.³⁸

Last under the heading of shape come those creatures that we admire for their beauty, since the very manner in which they have been made seems to suggest a special love on the Creator's part. By contrast with the beautiful, there exist also the monstrous or the ridiculous, whose very remoteness from human notions of propriety excites admiration. Once again, Hugh finds occasion to launch into a catalogue of marvels:

Why does the crocodile not move his lower jaw when he eats? And how can the salamander remain unharmed in fire? Who gave the hedgehog spines, and taught him, rolling like a wheel, to get all wrapped up in fallen apples, which he bears away, squeaking like a cart? And [who taught] the ant, which, foreseeing the coming winter, fills her granary with seeds? [Who taught] the spider, which weaves webs from her own vitals, to catch her prey? These are witnesses to the wisdom of God.³⁹

While Hugh finds in each of these creatures — whether exotic or familiar — some witness to the wisdom of God, the ultimate marvel in his view is hardly exotic — it is the fact of reproduction according to genus and species, so that “even in so many, the one propagated likeness does not deviate from the first, original form.”⁴⁰ Down to the smallest details of dentition, bone structure, colour, and size, the nature of each species endures through the reproduction of one generation from another.

Finally, Hugh turns to the elegance of colour and other sensible qualities in creatures. “Vision itself,” he remarks, “proves how much is added to the elegance of nature, when it is adorned in so many ways with varied colours.”⁴¹ Continuing, he brings into play his own rhetorical colours, and presents the reader with a vivid set-piece in praise of sun, moon, stars, gemstones, and flowers:

What is more beautiful than light, which, although it has no colour in itself, nevertheless somehow colours, by illuminating, the colours of all things? What is more delightful to behold than the sky when it is serene? It glows like a sapphire, and with a most gracious kind of moderation exposes a glimpse of its clarity and softens its aspect. The sun glows red as gold, the moon turns pale as amber; some of the stars shine forth with a flame-like aspect, some sparkle with a rosy light, some indeed display a varying radiance — now rosy, now greenish, now white. What shall I say about gems and precious stones? Not only is their efficacy useful, but their appearance also is marvellous. Look at the earth crowned with flowers! What a joyous spectacle it presents; how it delights the eye; how it evokes emotion! We see the ruby-red roses, the

dazzlingly white lilies, the purple violets, in all of which not only their beauty but also their origin is marvellous — for how does God's wisdom produce such beauty from the dust of the earth?⁴²

In addition to visible characteristics that delight the eye, created things possess, to varying degrees, qualities that delight the other senses. Thus, the sweetness of perfumes, the softness of furs, and the melodious sound of both bird song and the music of the human voice all pertain to the elegance in nature that reflects divine wisdom.⁴³

While divine wisdom is manifested in the elegance of creation, divine goodness is manifested in usefulness. Hugh lists the necessary, the convenient, the agreeable, but also the gratuitous within the category of usefulness, and gives examples of each:

What is necessary to each thing is that without which it could not conveniently subsist — for instance, bread and water as food for the human being, wool or skins or any covering of that sort as clothing. The convenient is that without which life could continue, although it sometimes delights with more abundance — for instance, a cup of wine and a dish of meat as food for the human being, fine linen and silk, or any other kind of softer garment as clothing. The agreeable and congruous is that which, although it does not benefit the users, is nevertheless appropriate for use; such things are dyes of colours, precious stones, and whatever things of that nature may be suggested. The gratuitous is the kind of thing that is not, in fact, suitable for use, and yet delightful to behold. Such things, perhaps, are certain kinds of vegetation, and animals, birds, and fish, and similar things.⁴⁴

Now, it may be asked why God created things that he foresaw would not be necessary to human existence. Hugh explains by showing how the usefulness in the necessary, the convenient, the agreeable, and the gratuitous all serve to direct the human being to the Creator. The human being, who was created for the sake of God, holds a middle place between the Creator, who is above, and creatures — including the human body — below. The visible order of the world, meanwhile, is arranged in such a way that the human being may recognize, in these externals, what sort of invisible good is to be sought inwardly. Thus, the Creator demonstrated his goodness by producing not only the necessities of life but also the luxuries:

For if he had given only the necessary, he would indeed have been good, but he would not have been rich. When, in fact, he also adds the convenient to the necessary, he displays the wealth of his goodness, but when he tops off the convenient with the agreeable, then he demonstrates the abundance of his divine goodness. But when, last of all, he adds the gratuitous and the delightful to the agreeable, what else does he make known, than the superabundant riches of his divine goodness?⁴⁵

Having completed his survey of the *visibilia* in which divine power, wisdom, and goodness are manifested, Hugh proceeds to demonstrate their worth by contrast with human works. He notes that because of human limitations all human projects are deficient in some aspect, and cites as examples the work of the scribe and the tailor:

We see that the scribe forms the small figures more rapidly, and is more inclined to sweat over the ones that are to be given a large shape; and the more rapidly the pen is moved along, the more deformed are the letters that it expresses. And in the formation of garments, too, those who are extremely fond of beauty often lose usefulness, while those who want to retain utility cannot have beauty. But in the works of God multitude does not diminish magnitude, nor magnitude restrict multitude, nor do either multitude or magnitude impede beauty, and beauty does not remove utility, but all things are made as if they were made uniquely, so that when you have examined the universe, you will marvel at each particular thing.⁴⁶

With these remarks the first segment of the treatise is concluded.

I have reported Hugh's classified catalogue of the *visibilia* of creation in some detail, to display both his method of "reading" creatures and the evident delight that he takes in so doing. Each particular creature is understood as a "figure," sign, or letter on the parchment-page of the cosmos. To read, however, we must be literate. That is, we must be able to follow the correct method of interpretation, distinguish among the letters, divide the text (*partitio*), and then investigate its meaning.⁴⁷ This, in effect, is what Hugh has done, dividing his "text" by means of the triad of power, wisdom, and goodness and then subdividing it within each of these categories. "Investigation" follows; it consists of lovingly detailed contemplation of the variety of created natures and their meaning in relation to the divine attributes.

SENSUS: CREATION AND RESTORATION

To introduce the next section of the *De tribus diebus*, Hugh recapitulates by referring again to Romans 1:20, and the *invisibilia Dei*, which he will now proceed to consider. Which of the three *invisibilia* occurs sooner to the mind of the contemplative? Surely it must be the one which is most expressly or evidently announced in its visible sign or emblem (*simulacrum*).⁴⁸ The emblem of invisible power is the immensity of creatures, while that of invisible goodness is their usefulness, and that of invisible wisdom, their elegance. Immensity pertains to the essence of creatures apart from form, while elegance pertains to form. The unformed creature is like God in

that it is, but unlike God in that it lacks form. By contrast the formed creature is more like God in that it has both being and form. Thus, the elegance of creatures seems to be a more evident emblem of God than their immensity.⁴⁹ Moreover, a comparison between elegance and usefulness in creatures will show that elegance pertains to *habitus*, or quality, because of natural form, whereas usefulness pertains to act, in consequence only of use by human beings. It follows that the elegance that a creature has in itself, by a natural *habitus*, is more evident than the usefulness that must be brought out by human activity.⁵⁰ Accordingly, Hugh concludes, the first step in contemplation is to be sought in the emblemata of divine wisdom. He continues:

For the beginning of an inquiry is beautifully entered upon, in the quest for wisdom from the very emblem of wisdom, since the Father is manifested through his wisdom, not only when he sent his wisdom into flesh, but also when he created the world through his wisdom.⁵¹

To summarize and prepare his readers for a transition in subject-matter, Hugh reviews the four aspects of created elegance, namely situation, motion, species, and quality. Of these, he states, motion is the most excellent, since in natural motion there is not merely the image of life but also a kind of beginning of independent life. Among the four types of motion — local, natural, animal, and rational — the rational motion of the soul is singled out as superior, since it pertains not only to sense but also to intellect. Thus, the activities of the rational soul appear to offer the most perfect created emblem of divine wisdom, and from this chain of comparisons Hugh draws further conclusions with regard to the special place of the rational creature:

For this reason, the first and principal sacrament of wisdom is created wisdom — that is, the rational creature which, because it is in one sense visible, and in another sense invisible, is made the gate and also the road of contemplation.⁵²

It is the double nature of the rational creature — both visible and invisible, corporeal and incorporeal — together with its likeness to divine wisdom, that gives it something of the character of a sacrament, according to Hugh's definition of *sacramentum* in his *De sacramentis christianae fidei*:

A sacrament is a corporeal or material element set before the senses without, representing by similitude and signifying by institution and containing by sanctification some invisible and spiritual grace.⁵³

In the next segment of the *De tribus diebus*, Hugh describes ways in which rationality becomes a place of access through which a human being enters, first into recognition of the human being's own invisible or spiritual nature, and then into contemplation of the divine nature. He notes that the part of us that is capable of reason is separate from the flesh, even though it is somehow infused into flesh and commingled with it. Because it is separate from the flesh, he continues, it must have had a separate origin from that of the flesh — since, indeed, it recognizes that it has not always existed and so must have an origin. If the origin of the rational part of the human being is not corporeal, then it is not produced from matter but created *ex nihilo*. Since *nihil* cannot give itself being, this rational part must have received its being from another.⁵⁴ Hugh's presentation then shifts into a complex and closely argued sequence in which, it appears, he draws on Anselm's arguments in the *Monologion* to show that this Other must ultimately be identified as the eternal Creator.⁵⁵ The Creator, moreover, is shown to exist necessarily, and to exist without beginning or end, uncaused and unceasing.

From these fairly abstract speculations on the being of the Creator, Hugh returns to his catalogue for "reading" creatures and applies it to demonstrate the attributes of God. First, he demonstrates divine providence and governance from the four types of motion.⁵⁶ Then, by analogy with the unity of the human soul as it interpenetrates and controls the body, the Creator is shown to be one and immutable in relation to creatures.⁵⁷ Through an analysis of mutability in creatures, Hugh shows that, by contrast, the Creator — who governs, interpenetrates, and knows all things — cannot be mutable in quantity or quality.⁵⁸ Then, turning back to the divine nature itself, Hugh considers the relationship of Persons within the Trinity by analogy with the faculties of the human soul. Here, he relies on the Augustinian-Anselmian trinity of mind, intellect, and love, rather than using the somewhat less suitable Abelardian triad of power, wisdom, and goodness.⁵⁹ The survey of trinitarian doctrine is completed, finally, with summary presentations of the Father's love for his Wisdom for its own sake,⁶⁰ and the Holy Spirit as mutual love of Father and Son.⁶¹

Hugh's principal purpose remains the education of his reader into perception of the Creator through creatures, and to this task, at length, he returns. Having described internal relations in the Trinity, however, he can introduce a new topic, namely the mission of the second Person in the Incarnation. His text for so doing is Matthew 3:17, *Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi complacui . . .* The text is understood both as a statement of the Father's love for creatures and as an exhortation to the rational creature to

love divine Wisdom. First, Hugh shows how the text discloses divine love for creatures:

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Whatever pleases me, pleases in him and through him. For he is the wisdom through whom I made all things; in him I eternally disposed whatever I made temporally. And I love each particular one of my works so much the more, the more perfectly I see it agree with that primal disposition. Do not think that he is only the mediator in the reconciliation of human beings, because through him the foundation of all creatures is made commendable and pleasing to my gaze. In him, I study all the works that I make, and I cannot fail to love, what I recognize as similar to the one I love. That alone offends me, which departs from his likeness.⁶²

Continuing, Hugh then turns the text into an exhortation to love the incarnate Wisdom of God:

If, therefore, you wish to please me, be like him, hear him! And if perhaps you have departed from his likeness by doing evil, return to him by imitating him. In him, a precept is given; in him, counsel is given — a precept, so that you may persevere, and a counsel, so that you may return. Would that you had clung to the precept, but because you transgressed the precept, at least hear the counsel, hear him! . . . He is the Creator; he is the Redeemer; [he is] very God with me, he created you, who, with you [as] man, comes to you alone.⁶³

Christ, accordingly, is seen as a kind of threefold Word: he is the eternal Word or Wisdom in which the world was conceived; he is the word of the divine prohibition in Genesis 2:16–18, and so also of the divine Law; finally, he is the Word incarnate, reconciling humanity to its Creator and so also offering the means of return to pristine likeness to God.

With this exhortation to moral return and restoration, Hugh has completed the middle part of the *De tribus diebus*. Having analysed the *littera* in his initial catalogue of creatures, Hugh moved into the *sensus*, or deeper intention of the “text” of creation. In so doing, he moved both from surface appearance to inner meaning and from the objects of perception to the perceiving human subject. His focus shifted, accordingly, from the *visibilia* of creation to the *invisibilia* first of the human mind, then of the divine nature. By means of the Augustinian-Anselmian psychological trinity, he moved from perception of the Creator in creatures, to the relationship of Creator to rational creature in creative and redemptive love. The exegetical process does not, however, end there. Knowledge of God and love of God, like tropological understanding of the texts of scripture and creation, is completed by moral awareness and readiness, in consequence, for action. In

the final segment of his meditation, Hugh therefore moves into what might be called the *sententia* of his "text," or the innermost meaning of the world, when it is "read" in search of God.

SENTENTIA: THE THREE DAYS OF INVISIBLE LIGHT

In the concluding segment of the *De tribus diebus*, Hugh again recapitulates, reviewing the order of presentation. He notes that he and his readers progressed from the visible to the invisible by moving from an investigation of corporeal natures to the invisible rational nature. From the created rational nature of the human soul, they then proceeded to contemplation of divine wisdom. Now, he proposes to describe the return or descent from divine wisdom to the corporeal creature.⁶⁴ The initial progression toward divine wisdom is to be understood as the order of cognition, which moves from the exterior to the interior, to the divine.⁶⁵ The second series, however, is named the order of creation or foundation (*conditio*), since the rational creature is made to the image and likeness of God and is prior to the external creatures in which it may recognize what it has received inwardly from God.⁶⁶ In tracing the latter series, Hugh proposes to discover the use of contemplation: "for what does it profit us, if we recognize in God the loftiness of majesty, and gather thence no usefulness for ourselves?"⁶⁷

What, then, does the contemplative take with him from his ascent to intimacy with the *invisibilia Dei*? "From the regions of light," Hugh responds, he will bring with himself light.⁶⁸ Thus, having seen power, he will bring with himself the light of the fear of God. Having seen wisdom, he will bring away the light of truth. Having seen goodness, he will bring away the light of love. All three will have their effect: "Power excites the sluggish to love; wisdom illumines those blinded by the shadow of ignorance; goodness inflames the frigid with the warmth of love."⁶⁹ This threefold illumination by divine power, wisdom, and love Hugh compares to the daylight that illumines the eye of the heart, in the same way that corporeal daylight illumines the corporeal eye. It is further identified with "the three days of invisible light," and with the three stages of the interior life. These stages are the fear of God, inspired by the Father's power; truth, which pertains to the Son as wisdom; and charity, which pertains to the Holy Spirit as love.⁷⁰ The three days and their light, finally, are based on the first three days of creation week, before the creation of exterior or corporeal light in sun, moon, and stars. Sun, moon, and stars determine the exterior day, and by alternating divide day from night. Hugh shows, however, by a chain of quotations from the Psalter, Job, and Jeremiah, that these merely corporeal

days are to be rejected by the contemplative as imperfect. Delightful and beautiful as the created day may be, the fully educated reader must go beyond it, as he must go beyond the *littera* of sacred scripture. He must seek instead the interior day, or the illumination of the eternal Sun, the “day” of Psalm 109 (110), namely Jesus Christ, understood as the divinely begotten High Priest. “The day of wisdom is truth,” Hugh continues, and the Truth incarnate is Jesus Christ, whose “day” is announced through the work of the Spirit.⁷¹

From this focussing, as it were, of the metaphor of light in the person of Jesus Christ, Hugh is able to move to the climactic three days of Christ’s saving and priestly work, or the *triduum* of Holy Week. Thus, Hugh identifies the three days of interior illumination with Christ’s days of death, burial, and resurrection.⁷² These three days in turn are linked to the fear of God learned from the Father’s power, the truth of God learned from the Son as wisdom, and the love of God learned from the Spirit as goodness. Hugh concludes:

In the day of power, we die through fear. In the day of wisdom, we are buried away from the clamour of this world through contemplation of the truth. In the day of goodness, we rise again through love and the desire for eternal goods. So also Christ died on the sixth day, rested in the sepulchre on the seventh, and on the eighth was raised up from the dead. In similar fashion power, in its day, first kills us to strong carnal desires; then wisdom in its day buries us within the hiddenness of contemplation; finally goodness in its day makes us rise again, revived by the desire for divine love. Hence the sixth day pertains to work, the seventh to rest, but the eighth to resurrection.⁷³

Hugh’s deployment of number symbolism and interplay of triads brings the *De tribus diebus* to a conclusion of dazzling complexity. Not only has he led his reader step by step through the emblemata of the Trinity in creation; he has also turned the results of contemplation around to draw out the affective content of theological knowledge, and finally has applied this to the contemplative’s assimilation to Christ — seen not only as the preexistent Word but as the crucified and risen Saviour. The investigation that began with created nature, therefore, ends with the unimaginable perfection of the eighth day, or octave of the resurrection,⁷⁴ beyond time and sense experience.

CONCLUSION

Hugh’s treatise *De tribus diebus* might best be described as a “reading,” through contemplation, of the world outside the text of scripture, as if that

world were a "text" to be investigated on the three levels of exegetical meaning. It appears, as I noted, in some of the manuscripts as book seven of the *Didascalicon*; in view of its conclusion it may, as I suggested, represent a seventh "day" of contemplation following six "days" of exegetical instruction. It may also have been intended as a word of caution to the exegete, who has been advised at the end of the *Didascalicon* that reading is incomplete without meditation. In six books, the reader has learned how to do the work of the exegete, and in six days the Creator completed the material creation. Nevertheless, "the letter kills,"⁷⁵ and on the sixth day both Christ and the contemplative assimilated to him must die. Christ is buried in the sepulchre and the reader in contemplation. Only on the octave, or the new day beyond both work and contemplation, does Christ rise from the dead. With him, the reader comes to life in a resurrection that is the work of the Spirit, assimilation to divine love and an overcoming of both *littera* and material world.

What, if any, is the unifying principle that binds together the *Didascalicon* with the *De tribus diebus*, the text of Scripture with the "text" of nature, the "three days of invisible light" with the triduum of Holy Week? For Hugh, I would suggest, the key to unity of purpose in exegetical work is the unity of the divine Person, the Son as eternal *Sapientia*, both Creator and goal of the reader. The one divine Person of the Son is both the holy Wisdom and Word in which all things are created and the Word in whose Incarnation human restoration is achieved. Thus, knowledge of the eternal Word or Wisdom through creatures complements and does not contradict knowledge of the incarnate Word in Christ's saving work. Assimilation to his death and burial, finally, prepares the exegete and contemplative for assimilation into his resurrection and eternal life.

The whole process, moreover, can also be seen as an exercise in the task of becoming spiritually literate, since the Word is inaccessible to those who cannot read. More explicitly than most other twelfth-century authors, perhaps,⁷⁶ Hugh uses the experience of reading and interpreting scripture to unfold the stages of Christian existence. It becomes, indeed, his means of displaying the stages by which a believer moves from uncomprehending, exterior, and "animal" perception of the *littera* and the material creation, to spiritual understanding, fully internalized wisdom, or perfect assimilation to divine *sapientia*. For Hugh, finally, neither the task of learning to read, nor the process of growth into likeness with the Word or divine Wisdom end until the life after death. His world is open to the Creator's benevolent

power to change it,⁷⁷ and his reader's mind must remain open, too, in lifelong study.

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NOTES

¹ PL 176.811-38; it is found in the Grenoble ms. 246 as *Liber septimus*, and in Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine ms. 717 with the incipit, "Incipit liber de tribus diebus pro ea que in meditatione constat speculatio rerum et post lectionem secunda. Verbum bonum et vita sapiens" after the *Didascalicon*; see Roger Baron, "Etude sur l'authenticité de l'oeuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor," *Scriptorium* 10 (1956) 184; C.H. Buttmer, ed. *Hugonis de Sancto Victore Didascalicon de Studio Legendi: A Critical Text* (Washington 1939) xx-l; Vincenzo Liccaro, ed. *Ugo di S. Vittore: I tre giorni dell'invisibile luce; l'unione del corpo e dello spirito* (Firenze 1974) 6-14.

² See Brian Stock, "Hugh of St Victor, Bernard Silvester, and ms. Trinity College Cambridge 0.7.7," *Mediaeval Studies* 34 (1972) 152-73.

³ Hugh of St Victor, *Didascalicon*, Praef. and 6.13: Buttmer ed. 2 and 130 (= PL 176.741A and 809BC).

⁴ "Sapientia illuminat hominem ut seipsum agnoscat" *Didascalicon* 1.1: Buttmer ed. 4 (= PL 176.741D).

⁵ *Didascalicon* 1.3: Buttmer ed. 7-10 (= PL 176.743C-44C); compare Boethius, *In Isagogen Prophyrii Commenta* 1, ed. G. Schepss, CSEL 48 (Vienna 1906) 135-38.

⁶ *Didascalicon* 1.6: Buttmer ed. 12-14; compare Calcidius, *Timaeus a Calcidio translatus commentarioque instructus* 330, 2nd ed. J.H. Waszink, *Plato Latinus* 4 (London 1975) 324-25. See also Jerome Taylor, tr., *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St Victor* (New York 1961) (n. 35) 185.

⁷ *Didascalicon* 2: Buttmer ed. 23-47 (= PL 176.751A-65A); for discussion and sources, see Taylor, *The Didascalicon* (at n. 6) (notes).

⁸ Gregory the Great, *Homilia in Ezechielem* 2.9.8: PL 76.1047BC; but see discussions of Gregory, Origen, and Hugh in Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale* (Paris: Aubier, 1959) 1.1. 187-97 and 2.1.328-39.

⁹ "Quatuor sunt regulae Scripturarum, quibus quasi quibusdam rotis volvitur omnis sacra pagina: hoc est historia, quae res gestas loquitur; allegoria, in qua ex alio aliud intelligitur; tropologia, id est moralis locutio, in qua de moribus componendis ordinandisque tractatur; anagoge, spiritualis scilicet sensus, per quem de summis et coelestibus tractaturi ad superiora ducimur." Guibert of Nogent, *Quo ordine sermo fieri debet*, PL 156.25D.

¹⁰ *Didascalicon* 6.4: Buttmer ed. 119 (= PL 176.803B).

¹¹ "Contemplando quod fecerit Deus, quid nobis faciendum sit agnoscimus. Omnis natura Deum loquitur, omnis natura hominem docet, omnis natura rationem parit, et nihil in universitate infecundum est." *Didascalicon* 6.5: Buttmer ed. 123 (= PL 176.805C).

¹² *Didascalicon* 6.6-9: Buttmer ed. 123-29 (= PL 176.805D-09A).

¹³ *Didascalicon* 6.12: Buttmer ed. 129-30 (= PL 176.809B).

14 "Et iam ea quae ad lectionem pertinent, quanto lucidius et compendiosus potuimus, explicata sunt. De reliqua vero parte doctrinae, id est, meditatione, aliquid in praesenti dicere omitto, quia res tanta speciali tractatu indiget, et dignum magis est omnino silere in huiusmodi quam aliquid imperfecte docere." *Didascalicon* 6.13: Buttimer ed. 130 (= PL 176.809C).

15 "Rogemus igitur nunc Sapientiam, ut radiare dignetur in cordibus nostris et illuminare nobis in semitis suis, ut introducat nos ad puram et sine animalibus cenam." *Didascalicon* 6.13: Buttimer ed. 130 (= PL 176.809C); for the virtually untranslatable "sine animalibus cenam," see Taylor, *The Didascalicon* (at n. 6) 225, n. 54: "These are the concluding words of the Latin *Asclepius*," Hugh may have felt able to insert them into a Christian context in light of the contrast in 1 Cor. 2:14 between the "animal" and the "spiritual" human beings.

16 Buttimer ed., xvi.

17 Hugh of St Victor, *De tribus diebus* 1: PL 176.811C; the triad of "power, wisdom, and love" is derived from Peter Abelard's *theologiae* — see, inter alia, Peter Abelard, *Theologia christiana* 1.1, ed. E.M. Buytaert, in *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica* CCCM 12 (Turnhout 1969) 2.72.

18 "Potentia per benignitatem sapienter creat. Sapientia per potentiam benigne gubernat. Benignitas per sapientiam potenter conservat." *De tribus diebus* 1: PL 176.811D.

19 "Immensitas creaturarum in multitudine et magnitudine. Multitudo in similibus, in diversis, in permistis. Magnitudo in mole et spatio. Moles in massa et pondere. Spatium est in longo, et lato, et profundo, et alto. Decor creaturarum est in situ, et motu, et specie, et qualitate. Situs est in compositione et ordine. Ordo est in loco, et tempore, et proprietate. Motus est quadripartitus, localis, naturalis, animalis, rationalis. Localis est ante et retro: dextrorsum et sinistrorsum, sursum, et deorsum, et circum. Naturalis est in cremento, et decremento. Animalis est in sensibus et appetitibus. Rationalis est in factis et consiliis. Species est forma visibilis, quae oculo discernitur, sicut colores, et figurae corporum. Qualitas est proprietas interior, quae caeteris sensibus percipitur, ut melos in sono auditu aurium, dulcor in sapore gustu faucium, fragrantia in odore olfactu narium, lenitas in corpore tactu manuum. Utilitas creaturarum constat in grato, et apto, et commodo, et necessario. Gratum est quod placet, aptum quod convenit, commodum quod prodest, necessarium sine quo quid esse non potest." *De tribus diebus* 1: PL 176.812–13A.

20 *De tribus diebus* 2: PL 176.813B–D.

21 *De tribus diebus* 3: PL 176.813D.

22 "Et hoc utinam ego tam possem subtiliter perspicere, tam competenter enarrare, quam possum ardentem diligere. Delectat enim me quia valde dulce et jucundum est de his rebus frequenter agere, ubi simul et ratione eruditur sensus, et suavitate delectatur animus, et aemulatione excitatur affectus." *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.814A; compare, "Omnis itaque Dei creatio consideranti magna est delectatio, dum in aliquibus sit decor, ut in floribus, in aliquibus medicina, ut in herbis, in quibusdam pastus, ut in frugibus, in quibusdam significatio, ut in vermibus vel avibus. Omnia igitur bona et omnia propter hominem creata." Honorius Augustodunensis, *Elucidarium* 1.67, ed. Y. Lefèvre in *L'Elucidarium et les lucidaires* (Paris 1954) 373.

23 "Universus enim mundus iste sensibilis quasi liber est scripto digito Dei, hoc est virtute divina creatus, et singulae creaturae quasi figurae quaedam sunt, non humano placito inventae, sed divino arbitrio institutae ad manifestandum invisibilium Dei sapientiam. Quemadmodum autem si illiteratus quis apertum librum videat, figuras aspicit,

litteras non cognoscit: ita stultus et 'animalis homo,' qui 'non percipit ea quae Dei sunt,' in visibilibus istis creaturis foris videt speciem, sed intus non intelligit rationem. Qui autem spiritualis est, et omnia dijudicare potest, in eo quidem quod foris considerat pulchritudinem operis, intus concipit quam miranda sit sapientia Creatoris." *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.814BC; compare John Scotus Eriugena on the theophanies, *Periphyseon* 3.4: PL 122. 633B-34A; for a general discussion of the metaphor of the book of nature, see E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. W.R. Trask (London 1953) 319-26.

²⁴ *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.814D.

²⁵ *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.815B.

²⁶ See, e.g. John Scotus Eriugena, *Periphyseon* 4.9-10: PL 122.779C-85D, and Honorius Augustodunensis, *Elucidarium* 1.59: 371; classical sources include Plato, *Timaeus* 42E, Chalcidius 202: Waszink ed. 221-22, Macrobius, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* 2.12, ed. J. Willis (Leipzig 1963) 130-33, and Isidore, *De natura rerum* 9.2: PL 83.978A.

²⁷ "Quid repugnantius esse potest aqua et igne? Quae tamen in rerum natura ita Dei contemperavit prudentia, ut non solum ad invicem commune societatis vinculum non dissipent, verum etiam nascentibus cunctis ut subsistere possint vitale nutrimentum subministret." *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.815D.

²⁸ *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.815D-16A; for a discussion of sources and contemporary parallels, see Stock (at n. 2) 155-60.

²⁹ "Sic singulis locis, singulis temporibus, singulis rebus divina providentia causas suas distribuit, ut in nullo penitus ordo rerum perturbetur." *De tribus diebus* 5: PL 176.816B.

³⁰ *De tribus diebus* 5: PL 176.816CD.

³¹ *De tribus diebus* 6: PL 176.816D-17B.

³² *De tribus diebus* 4: PL 176.815D-16A.

³³ *De tribus diebus* 7: PL 176.817C-18A.

³⁴ *De tribus diebus* 7: PL 176.818BC.

³⁵ "Haec cuncta mirabilia, et soli Deo possibilia sunt." *De tribus diebus* 8: PL 176.818D.

³⁶ *De tribus diebus* 8: PL 176.818D-19A.

³⁷ "Vide ergo, quid magis mireris, dentes apri, an tineae; alas gryphis, an sciniphis? caput equi an locustae? crura elephantis, an culicis? rostrum suis, an sucerionis? aquilam an formicam? leonem an pulicem? tigridem an testudinem? Ibi miraris magnitudinem, hic miraris parvitatem; corpus parvum magna sapientia conditum. Magna sapientia cui nulla subrept negligentia. Illis dedit oculis, quos vix comprehendere potest oculus; et in tam exiguis corporibus sic omnifariam lineamenta naturae suae congrua plenissime distribuit, ut nihil videas deesse in minimis eorum omnium quae natura formavit in magnis." *De tribus diebus* 9: PL 176.819CD.

³⁸ "Ut attendat quanto studio mala aeterna fugere et bona aeterna appetere debet, si pro his temporalibus bonis adipiscis et malis evitandis tantos labores sustinet." *De tribus diebus* 10: PL 176.820A.

³⁹ "Quare crocodilus manducans inferiorem molam non movet? et quomodo salamandra in igne illaesa permanet? quis dedit eirico spinas, et docuit eum, ut se pomis turbine discussis involvat, quibus onustus incedens stridet quasi plaustrum? et formicam

quae hiemis superventurae praescia granis horrea sua replet? araneam quae de visceribus suis laqueos necit unde praedam capiat? Isti sunt testes sapientiae Dei." *De tribus diebus* 11: PL 176.820B.

40 "Et in tam multis similitudo una propagata primae originis formam non mutat." *De tribus diebus* 11: PL 176.820C.

41 "Cum ipse visus probet quantum naturae decoris additur, cum tam variis distincta coloribus adornatur." *De tribus diebus* 12: PL 176.820D-21A.

42 "Quid luce pulchrius, quae cum colorem in se non habeat, omnium tamen colores rerum ipsa quoddammodo illuminando colorat? Quid jucundius ad videndum coelo cum serenum est, quod splendet quasi sapphirus; et gratissimo quodam suae claritatis temperamento visum excipit et demulcet aspectum? Sol sicut aurum rutilat; luna pallet quasi electrum; stellarum quaedam flammeo aspectu radiant; quaedam luce rosea micant; quaedam vero alternatim nunc roseum, nunc viridem, nunc candidum fulgorem demonstrant. Quid de gemmis et lapidibus pretiosis narrem? Quorum non solum efficacia utilis, sed aspectus quoque mirabilis est. Ecce tellus redimita floribus, quam jucundum spectaculum praebet, quomodo visum delectat, quomodo affectum provocat? Videmus rubentes rosas, candida lilia, purpureas violas, in quibus omnibus non solum pulchritudo sed origo quoque mirabilis est. Quomodo scilicet Dei sapientia de terrae pulvere talem producit speciem?" *De tribus diebus* 12: PL 176.821AB.

43 *De tribus diebus* 13: PL 176.821CD.

44 "Necessarium unicuique rei est, sine quo ipsa subsistere commode non potest, utpote in victu hominis panis et aqua, in vestitu lanae sive pellicea, aut quaelibet ejusmodi indumenta. Commodum est quod, licet aliquando amplius delectet, sine ipso tamen vita duci potest, utpote in victu hominis, poculum vini et esus carniarum; in vestitu byssus et sericum, vel quodlibet aliud mollius indumentum. Aptum et congruum est quod, licet utentibus non prosit, ad utendum tamen convenit, quales sunt tincturae colorum, pretiosi lapides, et quaecunque ejusmodi censentur. Gratum est ejusmodi, quod ad usum quidem habile non est, et tamen ad spectandum delectabile, qualia sunt fortasse quaedam herbarum genera et bestiarum, volucrum quoque et piscium, et quaevis similia." *De tribus diebus* 14: PL 176.822AB.

45 "Si enim sola necessaria tribueret, bonus quidem esset, sed dives non esset. Cum vero necessariis etiam commoda adjungit, divitias bonitatis suae ostendit; cum autem commode congruis superadditis cumulantur, abundantia divinae bonitatis ejus demonstratur. Sed dum postremo congruis etiam grata et jucunda adjicit, quid aliud quam superabundantes divitias bonitatis suae notas facit?" *De tribus diebus* 14: PL 176.822D.

46 "Videmus quod scriba eas figuras quae exiles sunt, promptius format, in magnis figurandis propensius desudat, et calamus quanto velocius trahitur, tanto deformiores sunt litterae quae exprimuntur. Nam et in formandis vestibus, ii qui nimis pulchritudinem diligunt, saepe utilitatem perdunt; et qui utilitatem conservare cupiunt, pulchritudinem habere non possunt. Sed in opere Dei nec multitudo magnitudinem minuit, nec magnitudo multitudinem stringit neque simul vel multitudo vel magnitudo pulchritudini officit, neque pulchritudo utilitatem tollit, sed sic facta sunt omnia, quasi facta sint singula, ut cum universa aspexeris, singula mireris." *De tribus diebus* 15: PL 176.823AB.

47 *Didascalicon* 6.12: Buttimer ed. 129-30 (= PL 176.809B).

48 *De tribus diebus* 16: PL 176.823B.

49 *De tribus diebus* 16: PL 176.823D.

50 *De tribus diebus* 16: PL 176.824AB.

51 "Pulchre autem in inquirenda sapientia ab ipso sapientiae simulacro inquisitionis exordium sumitur, quia per sapientiam suam Pater manifestatur, non solum quando sapientiam suam in carnem misit, sed tunc quoque quando per sapientiam suam mundum creavit." *De tribus diebus* 16: PL 176.824BC.

52 "Primum ergo est ac principale sapientiae sacramentum sapientia creata, id est rationalis creatura quae, quia secundum aliquid visibilis est, secundum aliquid invisibilis janua contemplationis facta est pariter et via." *De tribus diebus* 17: PL 176.824D.

53 "Sacramentum est corporale vel materiale elementum foris sensibilibus propositum ex similitudine repraesentans, et ex institutione significans, et ex sanctificatione continens aliquam invisibilem et spiritalem gratiam." Hugh of St Victor, *De sacramentis christianae fidei* 1.9.2: PL 176.317D.

54 *De tribus diebus* 17: PL 176.825B.

55 *De tribus diebus* 17: PL 176.825C-26A. For sources, see Boethius *De Trinitate* 2, in *The Theological Tractates and the Consolation of Philosophy* ed. and tr. E.K. Rand and S.J. Tester (London 1973) 10-11, Anselm, *Monologion* 3-6, in *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi opera omnia*, ed. F.S. Schmitt (Seccovia 1938) 1.15-22; compare Honorius Augustodunensis, *De cognitione vitae* 7: PL 40.1011.

56 *De tribus diebus* 18: PL 176.826.

57 *De tribus diebus* 19: PL 176.827-28.

58 *De tribus diebus* 20: PL 176.829-30.

59 *De tribus diebus* 21: PL 176.831-32B.

60 *De tribus diebus* 22: PL 176.832.

61 *De tribus diebus* 23: PL 176.833.

62 "Hic est Filius meus dilectus, in quo mihi complacui.' Quidquid mihi placet, in ipso et per ipsam placet. Ipse est enim sapientia per quem feci omnia, in ipso aeternaliter disposui quidquid temporaliter feci. Et tanto amplius unum quoque opus meum diligo, quanto perfectius illud primae dispositioni concordare video. Nolite putare quod ipse tantum sit mediator in reconciliatione hominum, quia per ipsum etiam commendabilis et placita fit aspectui meo conditio omnium creaturarum. In ipso examino cuncta opera mea quae facio, et non amare nequeo quod intueor simile illi quem amo. Solus ille me offendit, qui ab ejus similitudine recedit." *De tribus diebus* 24: PL 176.834A.

63 "Si ergo vultis mihi placere, ei similes estote, ipsum audite. Et si forte ab ejus similitudine male agendo discessistis, ipsum imitando ad ipsum redite. In ipso datur praeceptum; in ipsum datur consilium. Praeceptum ut persistatis, consilium ut redeatis. Utinam tenuissetis praeceptum, sed quia transgressi estis praeceptum, saltem audite consilium, ipsum audite! . . . Ipse Conditor, ipse est redemptor; ipse Deus mecum vos condidit, qui vobiscum homo, solus ad vos venit." *De tribus diebus* 24: PL 176.834B.

64 *De tribus diebus* 25: PL 176.835A.

65 *De tribus diebus* 25: PL 176.835BC.

66 *De tribus diebus* 25: PL 176.835B.

67 "Quid enim nobis prodest, si in Deo cognoscimus majestatis celsitudinem, et nullam nobis inde colligimus utilitatem?" *De tribus diebus* 26: PL 176.835D.

68 "Quid nisi lucem de regione lucis venientes?" *De tribus diebus* 26: PL 176.835D.

69 "Potentia torpentes ad amorem excitet; sapientia ignorantiae tenebris caecatos illuminet; benignitas frigidus calore charitatis inflammet." *De tribus diebus* 26: PL 176.836A.

70 *De tribus diebus* 26: PL 176.836B.

71 *De tribus diebus* 26: PL 176.837A.

72 *De tribus diebus* 27: PL 176.837D-38A.

73 "In die potentiae per timorem morimur. In die sapientiae per contemplationem veritatis a strepitu hujus mundi sepelimur. In die benignitatis per amorem et desiderium aeternorum bonorum resurgimus. Ideo enim Christus sexta die mortuus est, septimo die in sepulchro jacuit, octavo die resurrexit, ut simili modo primum potentia in die suo per timorem nos a carnalibus desideriis fortis occidat, deinde sapientia in die suo intus in abscondito contemplationis sepeliat; postremo benignitas in die suo per desiderium divini amoris vivificatos exurgere faciat; quia sextus dies ad laborem, septimus ad requiem, octavus pertinet ad resurrectionem." *De tribus diebus* 27: PL 176.838D.

74 See Augustine, *Ennarationes in Psalmis* 6.2, ed. D.E. Dekkers and J. Fraipont, CCSL 38 (Turnhout 1956) 28; compare Honorius Augustodunensis *De neocosmo*: PL 172.259B; Rupert of Deutz, *De divinis officiis* 7.13, ed. R. Haacke, CCCM 7 (Turnhout 1967) 240-41.

75 Compare *Didascalicon* 5.3, Buttimer ed. 97 (= PL 176.791A), and 6.4, Buttimer ed. 121 (= PL 176.804D).

76 See discussion in Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy* (Princeton 1983) 322-25.

77 *De sacramentis christianae fidei* 1.2.22: PL 176:214CD; Hugh's argument is presented as a witty, polemical parody of Peter Abelard, whose view of the world as the best possible can be found in, e.g., Peter Abelard *Commentaria in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos* 1.20, ed. E.M. Buytaert in *Petri Abaelardi opera theologica* CCCM 11 (Turnhout 1969) 1.69.