

A BRIEF NOTE CONCERNING THE GRADUAL PSALMES.

Here follow in order fifteen Psalmes intituled Gradual Canticles. The Hebrew word *Mahaloth* signifieth Steppes, or Ascensions. The reason wherof Aarias, and some other Rabbins yeld, for that they were songe with hieghst eleuated notes, that can be in Musike. The Talmud faith they are so called, because they were songe in the fifetene steppes going vp into the Temple. But S. Augustin, S. Basil, and other Christian Fathers expound them according to the historie, and immediate propheticall sense, of the deliuerie of the Iewes from captiuitie of Babylon, ascending into Ierusalem: which is so situated on mountaines, that the way from all partes was by ascending vnto it. According to the Myftical sense, of ascending spiritually by vertues to perfection, and to eternal felicitie. For the way tending to vertue (saith S. Basil) is like to certaine steppes (or degrees) by litle and litle bringing the man that loueth wisdom vnto heauen. These Canticles therefore are prayers, mixed with consolations, for the ioyfull deliuerie of Gods people, from that great captiuitie in Babylon, which the Psalmist King Dauid saw in propheticall spirite, and which his posteritie felt, and sometime indured. Which againe as a figure signifieth the returne and ascending of mankind from sinne to grace, and from the miserable state of this world into heauen. Whereupon S. Augustin interpreteth this prophecie of the ascension, or eleuation of the hart, from the vaile of teares. In the meane time, whiles we are in this world, these Psalmes are consolatorie prayers, and propheticall assurance, that Gods people, Catholique Christians shall be deliuered from thralldom, and persecution of Paganes, Turkes, and Heretikes. As partly we see by the deliuerie from the Romane persecuting Emperors, from the Vandals, Gothes, and Hunnes: & therefore with assured confidence we hope and expect the like deliuerie from Turkes, and all Heretikes of Luthers broode.

Why the 15. Psalmes following are called Gradual Canticles.

The historical sense.

The myftical sense.

These Psalmes are consolatorie prayers and prophecies.