

# The Noah legend and the *Graham Manuscript*

A fresh appreciation of *The Whole Institutions of Free  
Masonry Opened* and its significance today

Bro. E. John T. Acaster

**D**ESPITE THOUSANDS OF COMMENTS HAVING BEEN MADE CONCERNING the *Graham* manuscript since its discovery in 1936 they have all been in the nature of comparisons to other Masonic writings. No thorough study, to my knowledge, has hitherto been made of the document in its own terms.<sup>1</sup> To do so would take more space, unfortunately, than is available in a single *AQC* paper. But an attempt will here be made to bring out and explain why the *Graham MS* is of the first importance in Masonic study.

- It is early, probably much before its ostensible date of October 1726
- It indicates the steps of entry, passing and raising
- It speaks of a further step for Masters, that of being conformed

<sup>1</sup>See Appendix.

- It alludes to an important element of what we know is contained in the Mark tradition
- It alludes to an important element now contained in the Royal Arch tradition
- It provides many evidences of a strongly Christian basis, linked to mild Puritan theology
- It is not unique as much of the content is backed up by at least three separate sources
- It opens the way to approach older and more subtle appreciations of Masonic ritual and meaning.

The first seven are the qualities visible to any discerning reader. The last may point to medieval roots of ritual within the Mason craft. This paper is organised to focus on the above within which it adduces much that is new, including the meaning of several hitherto misunderstood features.

## Dating

The document is dated ‘october ye 24 1726’. The positioning of the letters of the date, coupled with other factors, has led some commentators to wonder if the year is meant to be read as 1672. Beguiling as this might seem the plain fact is that the watermark of the paper is later than 1672.<sup>2</sup> The date of 1726 is most likely correct. But what can be observed is that the scribe, Thomas Graham, was copying the text from some earlier manuscript. He makes mistakes, misquoting the Bible, for example in 1 Kings, Chapter 7. His handwriting contains letter forms harking back to an earlier period, implying that he was copying the document in later life.

Dialect of N. E. England is used in the text which makes an estimate of dating difficult. More clues can be adduced by way of its religious slant and phraseology (for instance ‘therefore in so[me] parts by merite yett Much mor by ffree grace’). Other features also point towards a likely date of composition as being c.1630-1670.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Communicated by Prof. Andrew Prescott following his examination.

<sup>3</sup> One element hinting at this is the quatrain in memory of ‘Bazalliell’: ‘Here Lys the flowr of masonry superior of many other companion to a king and to two princes a brother Here Lys the heart all secrets could conceal Here lys the tongue that never did reveal.’ It follows an elegiac formula used in Jacobean England. Such mood is echoed, for example, in praise of Queen Anne c.1610: *Great Empresse of the North, admired Queen, Thy like in Britain hath never yet been seene, The daughter, wife and sister to a King Greatnesse and Goodnesse from thy grace doth spring*. An early period of geographical and astronomical exploration is also indicated by certain statements. Heron Lepper in *AQC* 50, 17, remarked that he believed the *Graham MS* to be a ‘genuine Masonic production of a period not later than the early seventeenth-century.’

## Masonic steps or grades

These are referred to most plainly in the opening catechism in answer to the question ‘What was behind you’?

... Perjury and hatred of [the] Brotherhood ffor ever if I discover our Secrets without the consent of a Lodge Except [they] that have obtained a tribble Voice by being entered passed and raised and Conformed by 3 severall Lodges and not so Except I take the party sworn to be true to our articles ...<sup>4</sup>

Other sections of the document expand on these grades. The first opens with the question ‘what was the first step towards your entering’. Then follows a series of questions and answers relating to this first step which include an oath: ‘for to hale and conceall our secrets’. After such examination the text goes on to state: ‘I pass you have been in a Lodge yet I demand how many Lights belongs to a Lodge’. Questions follow relating to lights and tools, ending up by: ‘I pass you entered yet I demand if you were raised.’ The matters thenceforward relate to ensuring that building works are securely founded in faith and prayer.<sup>5</sup> Here begin the esoteric elements (we might even call them ‘magical’, or more properly ‘miraculous’) backed by a supposedly historical account of how these came about.

The heroes of the saga are listed: Noah, ‘Bazallieil’, Hiram. Each of the three possessed ‘a vertuable secret’, ‘a holy inspiration’. By this power Noah was able to build a secure ark in which to put ‘all things needful for the new world’. Bezaleel was enabled to build the tabernacle, ‘his works be came so ffameious’. Hiram was successfully commissioned by ‘Sollomon’ to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, ‘all things needful ... was not holden ffrom that wise king’.<sup>6</sup>

The ‘vertuable secret’ has been retained within Masonry: ‘So all Being ffined then was the Secrets off ffree Masonry ordered aright as is now and will be to the E End of the world for such as do rightly understand it’.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Capitalization of some first letters occurs throughout the document. No significance is to be attached to this. In most instances it is a feature of flourishment or of comfortable letter formation.

<sup>5</sup> Jan Snoek comments that even before this, there are two implicit references to the tower of Babel: ‘we mean that we forsake self righteousness and differs ffrom these baballionians who presumed to build to heaven’ and ‘the presumption of the Baballionians afforesaid had vexed the God head in so much the Language was Confounded ffor their sake so that no mankind ffor ever was to do the Like again without a devine Lisiance.’ This theme is characteristic of the Harodim tradition.

<sup>6</sup> Jan Snoek comments that the Ark of Noah is the central subject of the second, the Tabernacle and the Temple of Solomon are the central subjects of the third degree of *Le Parfait Maçon*, Paris, 1744. The central theme of the first degree there is the Fall, and that of the fourth (Scots Master) is the return from Babylon under Zerubbabel. He has argued that these were at that time probably the rituals worked by the Jacobite Harodim lodges in Paris.

<sup>7</sup> See the subsequent section ‘The Raising of Noah’.

## Conformation of Masters

This seems to have been a special process as referred to under ‘Masonic Steps or Grades’ above. It required the attendance of authorised brethren of three different lodges [‘by 3 severall Lodges’]. The candidate had to have been entered passed and raised, but in a later section it expands to say ‘the master mason he teaches the trade and ought to have a trible voice in teaching of our secrets if he be a bright man . . .’ The earlier section mentions that a person who is ‘conformed’ has the privilege to ‘discover [disclose] our Secrets without the consent of a Lodge.’<sup>8</sup> More is said about the significance of the ‘trible voice’ in later parts of the *Graham* manuscript. A further meaningful interpretation of this is provided within the ‘Bazallieil’ portion of this paper.

## The Mark tradition

Mark Masonry is usually held to have emerged in the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Tantalising elements, however, appear earlier, such as in the ‘Dedication’ to *Long Livers* written in 1722.<sup>10</sup>

The *Graham* manuscript contains a long section describing the ‘tradition’ that there was a tumult among the workers during the building of the temple at Jerusalem. The labourers and masons had disagreed about their wage levels. King Solomon had to sort it out. The manuscript reluctantly records that the king had said that ‘You shall be payed all alike’, in order to calm all and to make all things easy, but ordered that a secret sign should be given to the Masons not known to the Labourers so that the former could be paid a higher amount as Masons ‘at the paying place’. This continues to form to this day an essential element of the Mark degree.

The *Graham* scribe implies he is not happy with this act of apparent duplicity. He excuses Solomon by producing a (‘very’) merciful interpretation that Solomon was meaning to say that you will all be paid alike ‘according to every mans disarveing’. The true lesson of the episode—indeed a powerful teaching—is the one continuing in the Mark ceremonies of the USA (but lost these days in England) in which the spiritual moral in *Matthew* 20. 1-16. is read out and accepted by the brethren.

<sup>8</sup> Jan Snoek comments “Until 1760, this is a privilege claimed by Scots Masters; from 1760 onwards this privilege moves to those having the French Rose Croix degree”.

<sup>9</sup> A date of 1769 in Portsmouth is still the earliest record of an English body, namely a Royal Arch Chapter, and the earliest attestation in Scotland dates from 1770 at Dumfries, again in a Royal Arch context. However documentary evidence from Newcastle-upon-Tyne gives a date of 1756, with clues to earlier conferral. N. B. Cryer, *The Arch and the Rainbow*, (Ian Allan Regalia, London, 1996), 56. Cryer discusses *Graham* 349-351.

<sup>10</sup> *Long Livers*, Robert Samber’s Dedication printed in Knoop, Jones and Hamer, *Early Masonic Pamphlets* (MUP, 1945, reprint by Q.C. Correspondence Circle Ltd, 1978), 43-68.

## The Royal Arch tradition

Companions of the Royal Arch will already have recognised its special feature, laid out among the former quotations. It seems to have been particularly associated with Bezaleel:

... who was so Called of God before [he was] conceived in the [womb/flesh?] and this holy man knew by inspiration [the in-dwelling of the Spirit] that the secret titles and primitive pallies of the God head was preservative and he builded on them in so much that no infernall squandering spirit durst presume to shake his handy work so his works be came so fameious ...

By 'secret titles and primitive pallies' is meant (in my opinion) the inner forms of the Holy Name and the original parlies (oral exchanges, from which concept is derived 'parliament') of the Godhead. 'Primitive' merely means original, or in very early times. Ruminations upon the esoteric matters of the inner forms of the Holy Name have had a long and wide history which need not concern us. The essence, however, is to be found within the exchanges ritually expressed, by word and action, in Royal Arch working. This concept can be recognised as associated with the Conformation of Masters, a procedure apparently conducted by representatives of three distinct lodges.<sup>11</sup>

## Puritan theology of a mild kind

The proper *Graham* title, *The Whole Institutions of Free Masonry*, could be read as an allusion to Calvin's famous *The Institution of the Christian Religion*, first published in English translation in 1561. The opening salutation of the *Graham MS*<sup>12</sup> is a declaration as if from one coming from 'a right worshipfull Lodge of Masters and ffellows belonging to God and holy saint John' and who 'doth greet all true and perfect brothers of our holy secrets'. His lodge is also described to be 'true and perfect'.

Free Masonry in the *Graham* manuscript is said to have received its name as being 'a ffree gift of God to the children of men.' The 'free gift' in protestant terminology was linked to a concept of justification by faith, 'the one thing needful', in order to achieve salvation, in contra-distinction to the Catholic insistence additionally on a requirement for 'works'.

The religious attitude promoted throughout the *Graham* text is a strongly Trinitarian one. It is not a Socinian (Unitarian) or Latitudinarian one (as might have been

<sup>11</sup> This should not come as a surprise to those conversant with the third chapter of Gould's *History of Masonry*. The Strasburg Ordinances refer to the organisation of the mason craft, meetings in chapter form, and the judgement of three Masters being sought, with local authority given to those Masters in possession of 'the Book'.

<sup>12</sup> As a sideline it could be noticed that English inns for passing travellers are met with occasionally with the name 'The Salutation'. It is unlikely that they were commemorating the '*Ave Maria*'.

expected from a religious writer of around 1700). It enjoins humility, and couples this to the power and effectiveness of faith and prayer. As a prime example, the sons of Noah, ‘Shem, Ham and Japheth,’ seeking ‘the vertuable secret’ which their father had possessed,

‘... they not Douting but did most ffirmly be Leive that God was able and would also prove willing through their faith prayer and obedience for to cause what they did find for to prove as vertuable to them as if they had received the secret at ffirst ffrom God himself at its head spring...’

This key is necessary to appreciate the religious thrust of the *Graham* manuscript and of its wider implications for early Freemasonry. A perplexing later passage can consequently be unlocked:

... yet it is to belieued and allso under stood that such a holy secret could never be Lost while any good servant of God remained alive on the earth for every good servant of God had hath and allways will have a great part of that holy secret altho they know it not themselves nor by what means to mak use thereof for it hapened with the world at that time as it did with the Sammaritan church about christ they were Seeking ffor what they did not want [i.e. lack] But their deep Ignorance could not disarne it...

The above is a pure piece of preaching (exemplified in ‘yet it is to be beleivud and also understood that’). It runs to the effect that all good servants of God do possess ‘the great part of that holy secret’ though they may not know it, or how to use it, just as the ordinary people around Christ were looking for something that they were already in reach of, if enlightened, namely the efficacious supernatural power of faith and prayer when tendered with humility.

Finally the *Graham* author draws towards the conclusion:

... therefore in so[me] parts by Merite yet Much mor by ffree grace Masonry obtained aname and anew command—their name doth signifie strength and their answere beauty and their command Love...

He justifies this triplet of strength, beauty, and love, by reference to

... the wonderfull works of hiram at the building off the house of the Lord—  
... So all Being ffinised then was the secrets off ffree Masonry ordered aright as is now and will be to the E End of the world for such as do rightly understand it...<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> It may be germane to quote an article from the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the Presbyterian document drawn up under Cromwell: ‘Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied by all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but works by love.’

Note that this completion of the teaching of Freemasonry as per *Graham* is stated to end with the wonderful works of Hiram at the building of the house of the Lord. It sets neither Noah, nor Solomon, (nor Christ—the ‘Cornerstone’ – nor Peter, nor Moses, nor Bezaleel) at the apex, but all is subsumed within the person and works of Hiram. Upon Hiram has the mantle of Noah, in the First Age of the world, been thrown.

### Separate sources

There are three other shorter texts known which closely resemble parts of *Graham*. Each one seems to have been accessed from separate, perhaps original, versions of the main question and answer parts. They are all couched in a form which is easier to use for instructional purposes rather than the full ‘historical’ narrative which *Graham* itself offers. Their separate existence confirms the veridical nature of the *Graham* catechismal outline. This spread of testimony also displays that the *Graham* text was not quirky but originally had some wide acceptance. The peculiar differences within each variant show that they are definitely not copied from what we regard as the fuller definitive *Graham MS*, as some commentators have carelessly surmised.

A. *The Whole Institution of Masonry*, a document bearing the date 1724.

This provides a short version of the *Graham* question and answer catechism. The variations are generally small. But there are two major exceptions. In the ‘Explanation of our Secrets’ section an explanation of the two secret words is provided:

... JACHIN signifies Strength and BOAZ. Beautiful. and had reference to the two Sons of Abraham. One to the Free Woman and another to the Bond. And also to the two Covenants. One of Works and one of Free Grace.<sup>14</sup>

This explanation is unique but can usefully be compared with the last section of the *Dumfries No. 4 MS*.<sup>15</sup>

The second major difference is to compare the questions and responses to ‘What postur [posture] did you pass your oath in’ (*Graham*) with ‘What posture did you receive your secret words in’ (*Whole Institution*). The replies in both<sup>16</sup> accord surprisingly well with present practice. That in *Graham* pro-

<sup>14</sup> Compare this with ‘therefore in so[me] parts by Merite yet Much mor by ffree grace Masonry obtained aname and anew command—their name doth signify strength and their answere beauty and their command Love’ from the *Graham MS*.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Solomon set up two notable Names [,] yt on ye Right hand [was] called Jachine [,] yt is in it is strength . . . for ye present ye sons of god have Received strength inwardly [,] for ye time to come god will stablish so with his spirit of grace . . . These two Names seem to note out besides this ye two churches of ye Jews & gentiles [,] yt of ye jews by jachin on ye right hand . . . This of ye gentiles by boaz on ye left hand . . .’ (*Dumfries No. 4 MS*).

<sup>16</sup> ‘I was nether siting standing goeing runing rideing hinging nor flying naked nor cloathed shode nor bair-

vides a deep and unusual symbolism by the initiate being said to be rendered to resemble ‘a very Christ’!<sup>17</sup>

B. *The Essex MS*. This manuscript was discovered in a collection next to a copy of another catechism, *The Grand Mystery of Free-Masons Discover’d* published in 1724, both transcriptions being effected in the same handwriting (not that of the collector, James Essex). It would seem reasonable, therefore, to date this document to c.1725 (not 1750 as was originally done).

The text essentially confirms much of the question and answer section of the *Graham MS*. The most significant variation is a new question and its answer (italicizations mine):

<i>Graham MS</i>	<i>Essex MS</i>
so the work went on and prospered which could not well go amiss being they wrought ffor so good a master and had the wisest man on earth for to be their overseer	Q. What reason can you give or any Man render why Masons should have a screet [sic] more than any trade.
<i>therefore in so[me] parts by Merite yet Much mor by free grace Masonry obtained aname and anew command—their name doth signifie strength and their ansvere beauty and theirre command Love</i>	A. Because the building ye House of the Lord pleased his devine Majesty <i>therefore in some part by merret yet much more by free grace the obtaining a name &amp; a new command the name signifying strength &amp; the answer beauty &amp; the command Love</i>
<i>ffor prooffe hereoff read the 7 and 6 of ffrst book off kings</i> where you will finde the wonderfull works of hiram at the building off the house of the Lord	For it is to be understood & also belived [sic] that every tipe of Gods House had some reference to the insuing will of God which he would have the Children of Men to practice and his 12 Apostles <i>For proof of this read the 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> of the 1<sup>st</sup> of Kings</i> Keep well the Key that lyeth in a bone Box under a hairy Sod

This section of *Essex* accords with the *Graham* account in its teaching but in a stronger form. Note that the phraseology matches, as does the spelling of ‘devine’;<sup>18</sup> the implication being that this section may have come from an alternative, but authentic, precursor of *Graham*.

C. *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened*. This is the title of a unique broadsheet printed in Dublin by William Wilmot in 1725. It is the most important of the three variants. This is because, as the continuation of the title declares, it constitutes a further revelation: ‘As also their Words and Signs’. It remedies, to a tantalising extent,

foot’ (*Graham*), and ‘Kneeling with Square and Compass at my Breast’ (*Whole Institution*).

<sup>17</sup> ‘... a reason ffor such postur—in regard one God one man makes a very Christ...’ (*Graham MS*).

<sup>18</sup> ‘without a devine Lisiance’, ‘nether can his devine goodness’, ‘one devine and ffour temporall’ (the *Graham MS*). Jan Snoek comments that the correct form ‘divine’ does not occur in the *Graham MS*. The antiquated form was used by Sylvester in *Bartas his devine weeks*... published in 1605.



the blank spaces left in the *Graham MS* itself by supplying some of the missing words. In any full consideration of *Graham*, *The Whole Institutions* should therefore automatically be taken into account.

Though not obviously so but a very important section is the following:

What is your foundation Words.  
Come let us, and you shall have  
What mean you by these Words  
We differ from the Babylonians who did presume to Build to Heaven,  
but we pray the blessed Trinity to let us build True, High, and Square,  
and they shall have the praise to whom it is due.

The first clarification provided by this section is the triplicity of ‘True, High, and Square’ where *Graham’s* text is faulty.<sup>19</sup> It is also interesting to note the capital letters accorded to this basic triplicity, no doubt an ideal standard of practical masons—as echoed (later?) by the Masonic ideals of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth in other contexts.

The second element of the *The Whole Institutions* to notice is that concerned with the ‘foundation Words’. This deserves separate consideration: it follows under ‘Other deeper matters’.

The third element, obviously, is the section head ‘The Explanation of our Secrets’. It begins plainly:

*Jachin* and *Boaz*, two Pillars made by *Heirom*  
*Jachin*, signifies Strength, and *Boaz* Beautiful,  
*Magbo* and *Boe* signifies Marrow in the Bone, so is our Secret to be  
Concealed. Tho’ there is different opinions of this, yet I prove this the  
truest Construction  
*Gibboram*, and *Simber* signifies the *Gibonites*, who built the City of  
*Simellon*. For proof of our two Pillars you may read the 7th Chapter  
of the 1st of Kings from the 13th verse to the 22d, where you will find  
the wonderful Works of *Hierome* at the building of the House of the  
Lord.

The tradition above corresponds in general to *Graham* but is obviously less guarded (as compared to the words from *Graham* in the table below). The writer/commentator/editor has thoughtfully tried to justify what he is presenting. There is, incidentally, no mention of Noah, even though the copy he based his summary on, to judge by the spellings and other clues, is of an old origin.

<sup>19</sup> ‘we forsake self righteousnes and differs ffrom these baballonians who presumed to build to heaven but we pray the blesed trinity to Let us build true Ly and square and they shall have the praise to whom it is due’ (*Graham MS*).

The fourth element is the confirmation given in the section beginning ‘The reason why Masonary [sic] receiv’d a secret’ (italicizations mine):

<i>Graham MS</i>	<i>The Whole Institutions</i>
<p>... so the work went on and prospered which could not well go amiss being they wrought ffor so good a master and had the wisest man on earth for to be their overseer therefore in so[me] parts by Merite yet Much mor by ffree grace Masonry obtained aname and anew command— their name doth signifie strength and their answere beauty and theirre command Love ffor prooffe hereoff read the 7 and 6 of ffirst book off kings where you will finde the wonderfull works off hiram at the building off the house of the Lord—</p>	<p>The reason why Masonary receiv’d a secret, was, because the building the House of the Lord pleas’d his Divine Majesty; it could not well go amiss, being they wrought for so good a Master. And had the wisest Man on Earth to be their Overseer.—Therefore in some parts by Merit, yet more by free Grace, they obtain’d a Name, and a new Command such as Christ gave to his Disciples, for to love each other, keep well the Key that lies into a Box of Bone, adieu Brother.</p>

This uses the words found in *Graham* for the answer, but in a cleaner style with more modern spelling. It includes ‘keep well the key that lies into a Box of Bone’ that we saw in the *Essex MS*<sup>20</sup> but, perhaps following the same editorial policy, omits any mention of the ‘hairy sod’!

It should also be noticed that the ‘editor’ of *The Whole Institutions* (perhaps the printer) has shown his purpose by displaying the practical elements of guidance in clear sections:

*The Salutation as follows.*

*The Examination as follows.*

*The Explanation of our Secrets, is as follows.*

He also emphasises certain main words, such as the list of twelve ‘Lights’: “*Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Sun, Moon, Master, Mason, Square, Rule, Plum, Line, Mell and Cheisal.*” In this case he has made a mistake, for the sixth Light should be ‘Master Mason’; he was accurate, however, in maintaining the proper distinction between ‘plum’ and ‘line’. The editor/printer has also had his text printed using a capital letter at the front of each noun in accordance with the common practice in early Georgian England. We know the original did not follow that (later) typesetting convention.

## Other deeper matters

### *A. The Foundation Words*

Graham addresses this subject by:

<sup>20</sup> ‘Keep well the Key that lyeth in a bone Box under a hairy Sod.’ (*Essex MS*).

... what is your foundation words at the Laying of a building where you expect that some infernall squandering spirit hath haunted and posable [i.e. possibly] may shake your handy work—

O come Let us and you shall have—  
to whom do you speak—  
to the blesed trinity in prayer—  
how do you administer these words—  
kneeling bairhead fface towards the east—  
what mean you by the expreshion thereof—  
we mean that we forsake self righteousnes and differs ffrom these baballionians who presumed to build to heaven but we pray the blesed trinity to Let us build trueLy and square and they shall have the praise to whom it is due—

*The Whole Institutions* has guided us to recognise that the correct triplet should be ‘True, High, and Square’, being a succinct expression of the aim of practising mason builders. The whole section of *Graham* quoted above explains the ritual procedure by which this objective is achieved.

The ‘foundation words’ mean the words recited at laying the foundation of a building which may be perilous to erect. They are referred to as ‘O come Let us and you shall have’. This may seem impenetrable until it is realised that this is a reference to *Psalms 95*, the *Venite*. Its opening seven verses run

O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand re all the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

The rest of the passage quoted from *Graham* proceeds to explain the ritual actions attached: kneeling uncovered facing east, praying humbly to the Trinity, forsaking self-righteousness (unlike the Babylonians at the Tower of Babel) for the vouchsafing of the ability to build true, high and square without infernal interruption, and promising the Blessed Trinity that they themselves would receive the praise to whom it was due.

The remainder of *Psalms 95* refers to the 40 years of the Exodus from Egypt.

Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

This forms an injunction not to tempt God. It carries resonances not just of the *Exodus* experiences which ended by establishing the chosen people in the promised land, but also from the period of Babylonian Exile before the purposeful release of the Jewish remnants to rebuild Jerusalem. Masonic rituals have been drawn from both of these sequences.

### ***B. The Raising of Noah***

*The Whole Institutions* ends by a curious (and Masonically unique) reference to a ‘word’ and its counterpart:

*Tapus Majester* and *Majester Tapus* is the answer to it

This is indeed odd and mysterious, but an attribution has been provided in *AQC* 51 (1940), 205, footnote 1, by Douglas Knoop. Apparently *Gaap* alias *Tap* is known to have been an influential demon associated with ‘Cham, the sonne of Noah’ whose power could be invoked for particular purposes. *Tapus Majester* [‘Master Tapus’] would seem to recall such an invocation, and the reverse formation would serve to reinforce the cry.

Reginald Scot’s book *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (published in 1584) includes *Gaap* as a ‘great president and a prince’, clearly a leader who might be expected to have dominance within the realm of the ‘infernall squandering spirits’ mentioned in *Graham*. This hints at the seriousness of the appeal to ward off these malignant or mischievous forces in a superstitious era. The ‘Lincoln Imp’, the subject of a fourteenth-century legend, is the most celebrated of this kind of sprite in England. *Wikipedia* comments:

The use of the figure is extremely widespread across England and Scotland. It is hard to imagine that each image was aware of the Lincoln example. It must therefore be speculated that the form is a widespread image predating its use at Lincoln, and simply an everyday deity in the same mode as the ‘Green Man.’<sup>21</sup>

This should lead naturally to an examination of the apparently necromantic raising of Noah. Noah had been possessed of a ‘vertuable secret’. Through this commission of power he had constructed a vessel to carry ‘all things needful for the new world’ safely across the otherwise all-destroying power of the great Flood. He had thus been specially endowed.

The adjective ‘vertuable’ does not appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary* [OED]. Its meaning can nevertheless be construed from the appropriate contexts of the noun ‘virtue’. The first such [3.3(a)] is defined as ‘Power or operative influence inherent in a supernatural or divine being’. The second [3.3(b)] is ‘An act of supernatural or divine

<sup>21</sup> Accessed on 22/11/2017.

power'. These usages are quoted by examples from the thirteenth century but are now archaic [3.a] or obsolete [3.b].

The transformative and preservative power that Noah's sons sought was 'as if they had received the secret at first from God himself at its head spring'. Instead of receiving this secret itself from the corpse they obtained 'a name as is known to free masonry to this day so went to their undertakings and afterwards works stood'. It was, in other words, a substituted secret. It was not a power directly obtained from the supernatural through an illegal and blasphemous act of necromancy (as in pre-seventeenth-century England might otherwise be imagined) but it was sufficient for their ordinary purposes of protecting constructions from 'squandering spirits' ['squandering' is simply a dialect word from N. E. England meaning 'wandering about, spreading']. The author of *Graham* is quietly careful to absolve these practitioners, and their possible imitators of 'raising', from any charge of witchcraft. The Craft in its third grade is thus justified and absolved. So much for the real and influential role of the Patriarch Noah for those 'that intend to learn by this'!

### C. *The virtue of Bezaleel*

'Bazalliell', according to *Graham*:

... was so Called of God before conceived in the [womb] and this holy man knew by inspiration that the secret titles and primitive pallies of the God head was preservative ...

He therefore, like Noah, reputedly also possessed a supernatural power via direct inspiration from God.<sup>22</sup> His fame in construction during the reign of king 'Alboyne' was such that Alboyne's 'younger brothers' (two princes?) wished to be taught this noble science. Bezaleel agreed to share his power with them on condition that they were not to reveal the secret without another being present 'to make a trible voice'. He eventually died, with great honour, and was buried 'in the valey of Jehosephate.'<sup>23</sup> For lack of another to make the trible voice it seemed that the words were lost . . . but really, according to the author of *Graham*, the power could be recovered if men knew how.

The coming-together of three, or more than three, is of more than usual significance. It was stated earlier that 'the master mason he teaches the trade and ought to have a trible voice in teaching of our secrets if he be a bright man' and that section goes on to add the reason: 'because we do be Lieve into a Supper oratory power for alltho the 70

<sup>22</sup>This tradition is not evidenced in the Bible. *Exodus* 35 and 36 speak of Bezaleel as filled with 'the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship', a description very comparable with that of Hiram Abif.

<sup>23</sup>The valley of Jehosaphat, a place of gathering associated with divine judgement (*Joel* 3.2 and 3.12).

had great power Yet the 11 had mor for they chused Matthias in place of Judas . . .’ This is an allusion to *Numbers* 11.24-25 where 70 elders of the people around the tabernacle were empowered to prophesy, and to *Acts* 1. 21-26, when a replacement was needed for Judas among the remaining Christian apostles. The eleven prayed, asking for guidance in this important matter in which each individual, preaching the faith, would be of great account. The lot fell upon Matthias. This favourable result is taken, in *Graham*, to be the effect of a ‘Supper oritory power’, that is to say a super-oratory power, a concentrated power of prayer of more effect than just one bedesman alone, as ‘when two or three are gathered together’.<sup>24</sup>

It is from this root that the genuine secrets of a Master Mason are recovered. It is by such procedures of ‘primitive pallies’ that Masters are ‘conformed’. ‘Conformation’ is conferred through the conjunction of at least three ‘bright’ Masters independent of each other. This is where, surely, the Royal, or *Real*, secret is to be discovered (though mutilated since the abandonment of *John* 1. 1 by UGLE in 1834). The name of ‘the holy’ Bezaleel may have vanished from Masonic reverence between 1723 (when mentioned in Anderson’s *Constitutions*) and now, but his special and secret knowledge is unwittingly re-enacted in every Royal Arch chapter.

#### *D. The Widow’s Son*

Graham gives a scriptural justification for claiming that ‘the widows Son whose name was hiram had a holy inspiration as well as the wise king Sollomon or yet the holy Bazal-liell’. Hiram [Abif] was ‘filled with wisdom and Cunning to work all works in brass and he came to king sollomon and wrought all his work for him’.

. . . the exsplanation of these verses is as follows. . . the word Cunning renders ingenuity as ffor wisdom and understanding when they are both found in one person he can want nothing . . .

Thomas Graham, the copier of the manuscript, would appear to have made a slip in the section ‘wisdom and Cunning’, for the verse [1 *Kings* 7.14] has been quoted omitting the phrase ‘and understanding’<sup>25</sup> which should surely have been included since it forms an important element of the teaching just set forth above. The hearers themselves could aspire to wisdom and understanding, wanting nothing, as followers of their low-born but inspired model, Hiram, who was picked to be the ‘builder’ of the House of the Lord.

But where is there any mention of his death?

<sup>24</sup> Jan Snoek quotes the passage from *Matthew* 18.20 ‘. . . where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.’ and adds the remark that ‘two plus Jesus is also three.’ ‘Superoratory’ does not appear in the *OED*. ‘Super’ in its various adjectival guises does, in frequent use from c.1600.

<sup>25</sup> So, it should have been ‘wisdom, and understanding, and cunning’ (1 *Kings* 7.14).

*The signs and reception*

In order to distinguish a true Freemason it is apparent from the *Graham MS* that tests were involved. A salutation might begin, promising a greeting to ‘all true and perfect brothers of our holy secrets’.

The stages of such an examination are provided by the series of questions and answers set down in the first half of the *Graham* text. The actual reception of an initiate is distinctly recognisable and needs no explanation. When brought to light, the description is given:

... what did you see in the Lodge when you did see—  
I saw truth the world and Justice and brotherly Love—  
where—  
before Me—  
what was behind you—  
perjury and [the] hatred of Brotherhood ffor ever . . .

This passage, to be understood, does require reflection. What exactly was in front of this candidate, hinted at in such remarkable, conceptual, archetypal, terms? I would offer the suggestion that it was the bible, on which were placed a square and compasses, and opened at the beginning of St John’s Gospel. The Bible contained God’s Truth,<sup>26</sup> the set-square the reality and morality of earthly existence (the world), the compasses denoting the measurement and balance of justice, and the gospel of John exhibiting the new commandment to love one-another.

The term ‘perjury’ strongly implies the breaking of an oath. Later, the nature of the oath is provided:

... for to hale and conceall our secrets . . . to obey God and all true Squares made or sent from a brother . . . never to steall Least I should ofend God and shame the square . . . never to commite adultry with a brothers wife nor tell him a willfull lie . . . to disire no un]just revange [sic] of a brother but Love and releive him when its in my power it not hortng my self too far. . .

This is recognisably echoed in *Essex*.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> ‘The instrumental Cause: the word, the word of truth; he begat us by the word of truth. This is the instrument in God’s hand.’ Francis Warham, *Free-Grace Alone exalted in Man’s Conversion*, a sermon preached in Pauls on Aug. 23rd 1657, printed by J. C. for Edw. Archer, London, 1658, 9–10. ‘Christ is said, *Rev.* 2.1, to hold the Seven Stars in his right Hand: the stars, they are the Ministers, the Dispensers of Gospel Truth’, 12.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Q. What were you sworn to. A. To heal & conceal. Q. What other tenners belong to your Oath. A. To Obey God in all true Squares made or sent to me from a Brother[,] never to put out my hand to steal nor commit adultery with a Brothers Wife nor design any unjust revenge on him but love & releive him as far as you can[,] not hurting your self two far.’ (*Essex MS*).

*The Whole Institution of Masonry* and *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened* each quote shortened versions, with an indication of posture. From *Institution*:

... What posture did you receive your Secret Words in.  
Kneeling with Square and Compass at my Breast.  
What were you Sworne too.  
For to Hold and Conceal. [*Institutions*: 'Heal and Conceal'; *Essex*: 'Heal & conceal']  
What other Tenor did your Oath carry.  
For to Helpe all Perfect Brothers of our Holy Secret. Fellow Craft or Not. . . .

Their testimony is surprisingly similar. All three use the antiquated 'For to'. And both *Institution* and *Institutions* employ the term 'Fellow Craft'. This implies that 'Fellow Craft' is not a borrowing from Scotland, as has commonly been imagined, but was an expression used elsewhere as well.

*Graham* and the other texts ask:

... How shall I know you are a ffree Mason  
By true words signes and tokens from my entering . . .

The secret words have been referred to previously, and the tokens can be followed up in the same place. As regards signs:

FIRST, Observe that all Squares is Signs according to every Subject in Handling . . .<sup>28</sup>

This statement is very similar (with slight variations in punctuation and spelling) across the texts: *Graham*, *The Whole Institution of Masonry*, *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened* and *Essex*.<sup>29</sup> Moreover it forms the opening of all four texts, a pre-eminence therefore intended to be noticed.

This simple sentence by itself should be sufficient to provoke deep reflection upon the truth and importance of the *Graham MS*. It should cause us to consider the accu-

<sup>28</sup> This exact form is from *The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened*.

<sup>29</sup> The nuanced differences between them are, however, thought-provoking. *The Whole Institutions* and *The Whole Institution* begin with identical wording 'First observe that all Squares is signs according to every [the, Institution] Subject in handling. . .'. *Graham* itself begins 'ffirst observe that all our signes is taken from the square according to every subject in handleing . . .'. This statement therefore asserts 'the square' to be the foundational inspiration for Masonic sign-making. The *Essex MS* puts a descriptive gloss on such (usual) Masonic activity '1st observe that as you make Imitation of a squire is according to every Subject in hand . . .'. Jan Snoek opines that '*Graham* is better here, if—as I think—"the square" refers to the cube-shaped *Sanctum Sanctorum*'. *Graham*, however, deduces that at the assembling of the materials for Solomon's Temple 'all things was fitted affore hand yet not posable to be caryed on without a motion and when all things were sought ffrom the horasin off the heavens to the plate fform of the earth there could be nothing ffound more be Comeing more becomeing [*sic*] then then [*sic*] the square ffor to be their signe ffor to signifie what they would have each other to do . . .'. The implication left is that the basic vertical and horizontal elements of earthly experience had suggested the square as a fitting 'motion'.



racy of the meanings which have been assigned to the various signs by later rituals. It should be noticed that there are no references to gruesome penalties within the *Graham* account, merely the incurring of ‘perjury and hatred of Brotherhood for ever’.

## Conclusion

The *Graham MS* is worthy of deep study in its own right, arguably to a greater extent than any other Masonic document. It has more facets: we can plumb the past with much new and exciting insight; our present, with its signs and rituals, is revealed as never before.

This paper has not, of course, been able to comprehend all the elements contained in *Graham* and its three closely associated texts.<sup>30</sup> It leaves much for others to ponder over, and indeed to ask questions about. But that is what Masonic historical research should promote: the search for understanding and truths. Pearls no doubt remain here for those who care to probe around.

## APPENDIX

Following its discovery in Yorkshire in 1936, the subject document was announced and described by Herbert Poole as ‘The Graham Manuscript’ in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum* [*AQC*], 50 (1937), 5-29, accompanied by a photographic illustration and a transcription. That convenient title, ‘The Graham manuscript’, has stuck though the document bears as its proper heading: ‘THE WHOLE INSTITUTIONS OF FREE MASONRY OPENED AND PROVED BY THE BEST OF TRADITION AND STILL SOME REFERENCE TO SCRIPTURE.’ (‘Still’ in this instance carries the combined meanings of ‘yet’ and ‘always’ [*OED* 5(a) and 5(b)], still in evidence in N. E. dialect!).

Poole said that the text merited ‘hard thinking’. He gave a broad outline of its contents and compared various sections with other known sources. Additional comments were made by other scholars including Eric Ward and Heron Lepper. Lepper concluded ‘I for one am left wondering whether what we have still preserved of legend in the Craft may not be only a small part of the *Acta Latomorum* known to our medieval forerunners.’

Poole followed this up in ‘The Essex MS’. Fresh evidence on the Graham MS, *AQC* 51 (1938), 232-5. These comparisons prompted further contemporary comment by W. E. Moss in ‘Notes on the “Graham” MS of the Old Charges’, *AQC* 51 (1938), 223-5.

Heron Lepper’s words inspired J. M. Harvey to make his own study in ‘The Graham MS. analysed’, *AQC* 80 (1967), 70-108. This provides another photographic repro-

<sup>30</sup> Related texts could include elements of the *Dumfries No. 4 MS* which have not been possible to include in this focused study. They are traced in Poole’s original coverage of ‘The Graham Manuscript’ in *AQC* 50 (1937), 5-29.

duction and a copy of the transcript previously published in Knoop, Jones and Hamer, *Early Masonic Catechisms* (Manchester University Press, 1943, reprinted 1963). Harvey's examination closely followed the pattern of his analysis: 'Apart from an opening with Christian allusions, the text is mainly a traditional history combining three legends loosely strung together and preceded by a key-note catechism by way of introduction.' Harvey concluded that the main themes were stability and fidelity. The discussion which followed engaged the leading Masonic scholars of the day: Clarke, James, Milborne, Bathurst, Parkinson, Waples, Tunbridge, Horne, and Carr. Harvey's presentation and the ruminations form the most recent extended study of the *Graham MS* within its documentary context.

Passing mentions of the *Graham MS* have frequently appeared in *AQC*. The most substantial writings occur in Knoop and Jones, 'A Dialogue between Simon and Philip', *AQC* 57 (1946), 3-21. This begins by providing the text of, and commentary upon, 'The Whole Institution of Masonry', in a tabular setting by way of comparison with corresponding sections of 'The Whole Institutions of Free-Masons Opened'.

Wider-ranging considerations occur in Poole, 'The Masonic Catechism', *AQC* 60 (1949), 27-50 and 'The Substance of Pre-Grand Lodge Freemasonry', *AQC* 61 (1948), 117-154. These papers benefit by the comments offered by co-scholars.

The *Norman B. Spencer* prize-winning essay by H. L. Edwards, 'Concerning the antiquity of certain Masonic notions', *AQC* 87 (1974), 23-36, does not deserve to be forgotten and considers the *Graham MS* on pages 31-33. Mendoza recorded some important reflections on *Graham* in *AQC* 102 (1989), 'The Words of a Master Mason', 166-168.

Scattered mentions otherwise occur in *AQCs*: 66, 42; 81, 162, 166; 82, 292; 83, 338, 339, 342-57 passim; 84, 158, 294-306 passim, 323; 85, 210, 331, 338-41 passim, 343, 345, 347, 351, 364; 86, 41-2, 52-3, 55, 62, 80, 82, 275-6; 88, 74-5; 89, 52; 90, 214; 91, 134; 92, 101; 93, 184-5; 94, 119-120, 121, 126, 128, 133; 95, 158; 97, 39-40, 77, 81bis, 129, 148, incl. facsimile of 50:5-29; 101, 211; 102, 126, 166-7, 255; 113, 153, 155-56; 118, 258; 123, 94, 158-9, 245, 249, 250; 127, 13-16.

Of course many other reflections have been published elsewhere on the subject. One of the latest of these has appeared in *Franco-Maçonnerie Magazine*, Hors-Série No. 3 (2017) page 43, 'Le manuscrit Graham' by Irène Mainguy.<sup>31</sup> His conclusions run as follows:

*L'originalité du rituel du manuscrit Graham est d'être le premier rituel à proposer les fondements de la légende d'un grade de maître tout en montrant la coexistence de courants différents qui relient l'Ancien Testament au Nouveau. Les réponses données sont très imprégnées de culture vétéro-testamentaire. Par tous les thèmes qu'il évoque, ce manu-*

<sup>31</sup> I am indebted to John Belton for this reference. I must also here express my gratitude to Professor Jan Snoek for his most careful comments and suggestions towards improving the first version of my paper.

*script peut être considéré comme l'ancêtre de l'ensemble des rituels de la maçonnerie spéculative, car il porte en germe tous les éléments qui seront développés par la suite.*

[The originality of the Graham MS is that of being the first ritual to suggest the bases of a degree of Master, evidencing traditions at that time linking the Old Testament to the New. The elements are very much imbued with a culture drawn from the early Old Testament. Because of all the various themes brought out, this manuscript can be considered as the ancestor of a multitude of speculative Masonic rituals for it contains in embryo many of the elements which would be worked up afterwards.]

*D'accord!*

### Postscript—the Noah tradition

Noah's appearance in the *Graham* manuscript is a brief but arresting one. Is it weighty enough to lead to Anderson's identification of a Mason, in the First Charge of his 1738 edition of the *Constitutions*, as a 'true *Noachida*'? And what exactly did Anderson refer to, later in the same Charge, by 'the 3 great Articles of NOAH'? These aspects of the Noah tradition need to be clarified.

Anderson was keenly aware of Noah in his 1723 edition. On the third page of his 'History' he says:

... we may safely conclude the old World, that lasted 1656 Years, could not be ignorant of Masonry; and that both the families of Seth and Cain erected many curious Works, until at length NOAH, the ninth from Seth, was commanded and directed of God to build the great Ark, which, tho' of Wood, was certainly fabricated by Geometry, and according to the Rules of Masonry. NOAH, and his three Sons, JAPHET, SHEM, and HAM, all Masons true, brought with them over the Flood the Traditions and Arts of the Ante-deluvians, and amply communicated them to their growing Off-spring...

The opening reference to 'the old World' alludes to the first Age of St. Augustine's Six Ages of the World, the so-called Adamitic Age. St. Augustine identified a sequence in the Life of Man which became standard teaching over many centuries. For example, the chapters in the book *Long Livers*, published in 1722 by Robert Samber (under the pseudonym of Eugenius Philalethes Jun. and containing a famous Dedication to the Free-Masons) is arranged by these divisions:

- Chapter 1. Of the Immortality of the First Man
- Chapter 2. The Duration of the Life of Man in the first Age of the World, from the Creation to Flood
- Chapter 3. The Duration of the Life of Man in the second Age of the World, from the Flood until Abraham [etc.]<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> These phases of religious expression are called 'dispensations'; for example periods from the Covenant of

Anderson was thus seeking, by applied logic, to infer the introduction of ‘Masonry’ (which he compounded, on medieval authority, as equivalent to ‘Geometry’) into the First Age of Man. He could identify this Age as lasting 1656 years, drawing upon the deductive work of Archbishop Ussher in the mid-seventeenth century. Anderson has often been decried by later historians for his flights of fancy but to an educated Englishman of the period his sources for this paragraph about Noah and his offspring would have seemed well-founded.

Indeed Robert Samber shared the same outlook as Anderson regarding the person of Noah:

... This wicked and impious Race [of Giants] (for the whole Creation groaned under their Impieties) the Almighty washed off from the Face of the Earth by the Deluge, excepting *Noah*, a just Man in the Generations of *Seth*, with his Family. This good holy Man endeavoured, after the Flood, to restore the Law of Nature which had been so long obscured by the Pride and Impiety of those that perished. But his Sons and their Issue, following the Example of the Giants, began to domineer in like Manner over their Inferiors, to build mighty Cities and form Kingdoms, so that from *Noah* till *Abraham* there is no mention of any just Man . . .

Noah himself had been a holy and virtuous man, a man perhaps possessed of ‘vertuable secrets’! And, according to Samber’s account, he had wished to ‘restore the Law of Nature’, as had existed in the primitive times of the First Age of Man.

James Anderson considerably ‘embellished’ in his edition of 1738 what he had written in 1723. The first chapter of his History (‘From the Creation to Grand Master Nimrod’) describes the making of the Ark, which was engineered and commanded by four ‘*Grand Officers*’. He went on:

After the Flood, NOAH and his 3 Sons, having preserved the Knowledge of Arts and Sciences, communicated it to their growing Off-spring, who were all of one Language and Speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyd [sic] from the East, (the Plains of Mount Ararat, where the Ark rested) towards the West, they found a Plain in the Land of SHINAR, and dwelt there together as NOACHIDAE, or Sons of Noah . . .

Anderson attached to this a note that Noachidae was ‘The first Name of Masons, according to some old Traditions’.

What, then, does he mean by ‘the 3 great Articles of Noah, enough to preserve the

Works bestowed upon Adam to the Covenant of Grace provided by Christ granting salvation by faith. The *Westminster Confession* of 1646 in Chapter 7 stated that this was one and the same covenant ‘under various dispensations’. Chapter 8 declared Jesus Christ as the Mediator between God and Man using epithets such as ‘Prophet, Priest and King’. The ritual of the Royal Order of Scotland contains a reference to such dispensations: ‘What things ought Freemasons chiefly to commemorate?’ ‘Three great events: the Creation of the World, Noah’s Flood, and the Redemption of Man.’

cement of the Lodge'? I am indebted to Dominique Jardin for at last solving the puzzle and drawing the solution out. This is provided in his extremely full and valuable account of Noachism and its relationship to the 21st degree of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite.<sup>33</sup> The third section of his paper is headed 'The political and religious implications of Noachism or Noachism as ecumenism in the cause of Freemasonry.' Jardin notes, on the authority of Friedrich Nielsen as quoted by F. Katz, that it was the English scholar John Selden who brought to the surface three principal articles derived from the 'Laws of Noah'. These seem to me to be undoubtedly what Anderson was referring to.

According to well-known Rabbinic tradition there were seven laws of Noah. The seven Noahide Laws form a set of moral imperatives given by God for 'the children of Noah', meaning all humanity. John Selden (1584-1654) wrote about all seven in considerable detail in his important work *De Jure Naturali et Gentium Juxta Disciplinam Ebreorum*, published in 1640.

Selden had identified Noachite knowledge in the *jus naturalis*. Very frequently throughout his 1640 book he equates the two: *jus Noachidarum seu Naturale*, or *Jus Naturali seu Noachidarum*, occasionally clarified by *ante legem Mosaicam*.

Selden recalled that St. Ambrose had condensed the Natural Law associated with Noah into three parts. Selden's exact words are:

Capita Juris Naturalis seu Universalis, juxta Ebreos, designaturo subit in mentem illud S. Ambrosii; *Lex Naturalis* [In Epis. Ad Romanos cap. 5.]  
*Tres habet Partes, cujus Prima haec est, ut agnitus honoretur Creator, nec ejus Claritas & Majestas alicui de Creaturis deputetur.*  
*Secunda autem pars est Moralis, hoc est, ut Bene Vivatur, modestia gubernante. Congruit enim homini habenti notitiam creatoris vitam suam lege fraenare, ne frustretur agnitio.*  
*Tertio vera Pars est Docilibis, ut notitia Creatoris Dei & exemplum morum ceteris tradatur, ut discant, quemadmodum apud Creatorem meritum collocatur.*

A translation might run:

For the one who is going to define the articles of natural or universal law according to the Hebrews, there comes to mind that passage of St. Ambrose: [In his commentary on the *Epistle to the Romans* chapter 5]:

*For the natural law has three parts, of which the first is this, that the one recognised as Creator should be honoured, and that neither his glory nor his majesty should be attributed to any of his Creatures.*

*The second part is moral, that is, that we should live properly under the control of modesty, for it is right that someone who has some understanding of his Creator should control his life by rule of law, so that his understanding might have meaning.*

<sup>33</sup> Dominique Jardin, 'Le Vingt et unième grade du Rite Ecossais Ancien Accepté: Le Noachite ou Chevalier Prussien et le "noachisme"', *Grand Collège du Rite Ecossais Ancien Accepté, Sources VI*, (AMHG, 2007), 29-101.

*But the third part of the law can be taught, so that knowledge of God the Creator and an example of moral behaviour is passed on to others, that they may learn that one's just deserts lie in the hands of the Creator.*

Jardin following Nielsen expresses the three chosen items in a simplified form as being “*croyance et adoration de Dieu, vivre selon la morale, montrer l'exemple aux autres par sa conduit*”. [Belief in and adoration of God, to live a moral life, and to demonstrate this example to others by such behaviour.]

With this background we must return to Anderson's First Charge, ‘Concerning GOD and Religion’ in the 1738 *Constitutions*. We should now be able to mull over each word and phrase with greater understanding:

A MASON is obliged by his Tenure to observe the Moral Law, as a true Noachida; and if he rightly understands the Craft, he will never be a Stupid Atheist, nor an Irreligious Libertin, nor act against Conscience. In antient Times the Christian Masons were charged to comply with the Christian Usages of each Country where they travell'd or work'd: But Masonry being found in all Nations, even of divers Religions, they are now only charged to adhere to that Religion in which all Men agree (leaving each Brother to his particular Opinions) that is, to be Good Men and True, Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Names, Religions, or Persuasions they may be distinguish'd;: For they all agree in the 3 great Articles of NOAH, enough to preserve the Cement of the Lodge. Thus Masonry is the Center of their Union and the happy Means of conciliating Persons that otherwise must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

Clearly ‘THE WHOLE INSTITUTIONS OF FREE MASONRY OPENED AND PROVED BY THE BEST OF TRADITION AND STILL SOME REFERENCE TO SCRIPTURE’ (the ‘*Graham Manuscript*’) cannot fit Anderson's description for it is strongly Christian. But its emphasis is on living by reverence of God, the avoidance of self-righteousness, by humility and prayer. These are Noachite values.

When ‘brought to light’ the seventeenth-century candidate saw ‘truth, the world, and Justice and brotherly Love’, just as his counterpart does today, experientially, in front of the VSL, set-square, and compasses, being the continual centre of union within which Freemasons must strive to live.