CHRIST, THE ANIMIST

George Abbe

The World Is Too Much With Us

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. — Great God! I’d rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn.
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

—William Wordsworth

Christ was essentially an animist, though the churches have concealed this from us. All things — the lily, the sparrow, the ox, were equally sacred in his eyes. The ego of man distorted and censored his words when composing the Bible, an instrument to expedite the authority of a human institution, and so demeaned all other life to serve ecclesiastical purposes. If the slaughtered lamb was declared to be as important to God as the herdsman and owner (which I am sure Christ believed), then the priest could not persuade his people that God operated through the superior power and wisdom of one species (the human vessel of divinity), and the structure of law would be threatened.

But law, as we know it, must be superseded by love — for all things, equally — or the planet is doomed. Jesus knew and said this, but his message has been obscured, falsified, and diminished.

Walk in the fields, and if you drop your eyes frequently to the path before you — which you should do — you’ll note an insect, red, black, and gray perhaps, struggling up a blade of grass. Be careful