

T.S. Eliot, *Choruses from The Rock*, VII

In the beginning God created the world. Waste and void. Waste
and void. And darkness was upon the face of the deep.
And when there were men, in their various ways, they struggled
in torment towards God

Blindly and vainly, for man is a vain thing, and man without
God is a seed upon the wind: driven this way and that, and
finding no place of lodgement and germination.
They followed the light and the shadow, and the light led them
forward to light and the shadow led them to darkness,
Worshipping snakes or trees, worshipping devils rather than
nothing: crying for life beyond life, for ecstasy not of the flesh.
Waste and void. Waste and void. And darkness on the face of
the deep.

And the Spirit moved upon the face of the water.
And men who turned towards the light and were known of the
light
Invented the Higher Religions; and the Higher Religions were
good
And led men from light to light, to knowledge of Good and Evil.
But their light was ever surrounded and shot with darkness
As the air of temperate seas is pierced by the still dead breath of
the Arctic Current;
And they came to an end, a dead end stirred with a flicker of life.
And they came to the withered ancient look of a child that has
died of starvation.
Prayer wheels, worship of the dead, denial of this world, affirma-
tion of rites with forgotten meanings
In the restless wind-whipped sand, or the hills where the wind
will not let the snow rest.
Waste and void. Waste and void. And darkness on the face of
the deep.

Then came, at a predetermined moment, a moment in time
and of time,

A moment not out of time, but in time, in what we call history:

transecting, bisecting the world of time, a moment in time
but not like a moment of time,
A moment in time but time was made through that moment:
for without the meaning there is no time, and that moment
of time gave the meaning.

Then it seemed as if men must proceed from light to light, in the
light of the Word,
Through the Passion and Sacrifice saved in spite of their negative
being;
Bestial as always before, carnal, self-seeking as always before,
selfish and purblind as ever before.
Yet always struggling, always reaffirming, always resuming their
march on the way that was lit by the light;
Often halting, loitering, straying, delaying, returning, yet fol-
lowing no other way.
But it seems that something has happened that has never hap-
pened before: though we know not just when, or why, or
how, or where.
Men have left God not for other gods, they say, but for no god;
and this has never happened before
That men both deny gods and worship gods, professing first
Reason,
And then Money, and Power, and what they call Life, or Race,
or Dialectic.
The Church disowned, the tower overthrown, the bells up-
turned, what have we to do
But stand with empty hands and palms turned upwards
In an age which advances progressively backwards?

Voice of the Unemployed [afar off]:

*In this land
There shall be one cigarette to two men,
To two women one half pint of bitter
Ale...*

Chorus: What does the world say, does the whole world stray in
high-powered cars on a by-pass way?

*Voice of the Unemployed [more faintly
in this land*

No man has hired us

Chorus: Waste and void. Waste and void. And darkness on the face
of the deep.

Has the Church failed mankind, or has mankind failed the Church?

When the Church is no longer regarded, not even opposed, and men have forgotten

All gods except Usury, Lust and Power.