

FOR FORTY DAYS OF DROUGHT  
G. R. Holloway

The word is "sere," a desert word--  
archaic-- out of sync with satellites  
and cordless phones-- as alien as dust  
on cheek or tongue. The world is blurred,  
a curtain hangs from heaven, blights  
the view from every window, forms a crust  
on rows of withered crops. Small random sparks  
drift down in slants the sun ignites.

Back roads have turned to powdered rust;  
as red clay cracks, sloughs off, each layer marks  
our calendars, our hopes, then swirls away  
on smoking wind and burning gust.  
Relent! Please rain your mercy, Lord, today--  
before our hearts become too dry to pray!