



## DEEP AS THE CURSE HAS DUG

Aimee Joseph

*He comes to make His blessings flow/  
Far as the curse is found/  
Far as the curse is found/  
Far as, far as the curse is found.*

Few Christmas carols have had the staying power of Isaac Watt's Joy to the World. Even those who don't practice the Christian faith loudly belt out its chorus at candle-lighting ceremonies and holiday gatherings. We hum to it while shopping for stocking stuffers. Its tune floods our kitchens as we make cookies enough for a small nation.

The catchy, well-known tune is undergirded by a bedrock of rich theological realities meant to inform our living well beyond the holiday season. The Coming of Christ as an infant into time and space left eternal ripples that changed the very fabric of human existence. The song reminds us that the ripples of His coming are to reach to the farthestmost places where the curse has been wreaking its havoc.

When Adam and Eve first distrusted and then quickly disobeyed the Lord's protective commands, shalom was shattered. Devastating fissures were fixed between God and man, within mankind both inter-personally and intra-personally, and between mankind and nature. The Son born in Bethlehem of Judea was the beginning of shalom being restored.

I know this theologically; however, I deeply struggle to believe this personally and experientially. Sometimes I am overcome and overwhelmed with the darkness out there in the world. Other times, I am completely paralyzed and appalled at the darkness in here, within me. This past few weeks have been the latter.

Despite the innumerable blessings around me, I find complaining and discontentment squatting in my heart. Even though I am attempting to fight the consumerism that marks Christmas, my heart gets distracted by the siren songs the Dollar Zone. Even though I want to live intentionally, I still find myself frittering time away on screens or through an instinctive desire to keep busy. In these patterns, I realize just how deeply the curse has dug into the caverns of my soul.

I need to know that Christ came not only to make his blessings known far as the curse is found, but to let them drip as deep as the curse has dug.

*Deep as the Curse Has Dug*

*You came to make mercy known  
As far as the curse is found;  
But can it be possibly drip  
Into dungeons underground?*

*The curse has crept into crevices,  
Pooling in pockets of my soul.  
I've so grown used to its effects,  
It's hard to imagine being whole.*

*Deep as the curse has dug  
Can Your love descend?  
It seems unthinkable that you  
My damaged heart could mend.*

*May Your Triune Presence  
Pervade both far and deep.  
Let Your Agape love into  
My deep darknesses creep.*

*Son of God Most High  
Who descended into Hell,  
With Your power permeate  
This my soul's murky well.*

*Change me into Your image,  
As Your love casts out fear.  
It is cold, damp and dark,  
But there's room for you here.*

Contrary to the popular notion of a barn, our Christ was most likely born in a cave. The custom of the time was to keep one's animals sheltered in caves underground, as barns as we think of them weren't common. As such, it seems fitting that Spirit would descend to make His home among the caverns of the human heart. There, He does His work of applying the gospel deep as the curse has dug.