

## Minuit, Chrétiens

Minuit, chrétiens, c'est l'heure solennelle  
Où l'Homme-Dieu descendit jusqu'à nous,  
Pour effacer la tache originelle,  
Et de son Père arrêter le courroux.  
Le monde entier tressaille d'espérance,  
À cette nuit qui lui donne un Sauveur.  
Peuple, à genoux, attends ta délivrance  
Noël! Noël! Voici le Rédempteur!  
Noël! Noël! Voici le Rédempteur!

De notre foi que la lumière ardente  
Nous guide tous au berceau de l'Enfant,  
Comme autrefois une étoile brillante  
Y conduisit les chefs de l'Orient.  
Le Roi des rois naît dans une humble crèche;  
Puissants du jour, fiers de votre grandeur,  
À votre orgueil, c'est de là que Dieu prêche.  
Courbez vos fronts devant le Rédempteur!  
Courbez vos fronts devant le Rédempteur!

Le Rédempteur a brisé toute entrave,  
La Terre est libre et le Ciel est ouvert.  
Il voit un frère où n'était qu'un esclave,  
L'amour unit ceux qu'enchaînait le fer.  
Qui lui dira notre reconnaissance?  
C'est pour nous tous qu'il naît, qu'il souffre  
et meurt.  
Peuple, debout! Chante ta délivrance.  
Noël! Noël! Chantons le Rédempteur!  
Noël! Noël! Chantons le Rédempteur!

Note:

\* Sue Hartman, a friend of the site, suggests that "attend" in verse 1, line 7, be substituted with "await," making this line "People, on your knees, await your deliverance."

Another friend of the site, Gordon Taylor, also had some thoughts concerning this word. He wrote:

I write concerning my favorite carol, the "Cantique de Noel" by Adam. I do have a small comment to make regarding the translation of line 7, which is thus in French: "Peuple, à genoux, attends ta délivrance". This has been translated as either "attend" the deliverance, or "await" the deliverance. In fact, neither of these is correct in its modern meaning. In the French, in this usage, "attend" means "pay attention," as in the military command "Attention!" (same word in French, different pronunciation), not "attend", or "wait upon", as in an "attendant". In the verse, of course, the words are not meant to be so brusque, and the intimate, familiar verb form is used ("attends ta deliverance"). Thus, I think the obvious translation should be "Behold" your deliverance. The French meaning of "attend", to pay attention, is the original translation you provide, but few modern readers would understand it. And, in the carol, why should people "await" their deliverance, when the carol says it is right in front of them? That older meaning of attend, by the way, survives in Shakespeare, among other places. For example, from Antony and Cleopatra:

Mock not, Enobarbus.  
I tell you true: best you safed the bringer  
Out of the host; I must attend mine office,  
Or would have done't myself. Your emperor  
Continues still a Jove.

My thanks to Sue and Gordon for helping us better understand the message of this carol!

There are additional comments concerning this carol below.

[http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns\\_and\\_Carols/Images/Rimbault/table\\_of\\_contents.htm](http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/Hymns_and_Carols/Images/Rimbault/table_of_contents.htm)