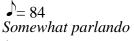
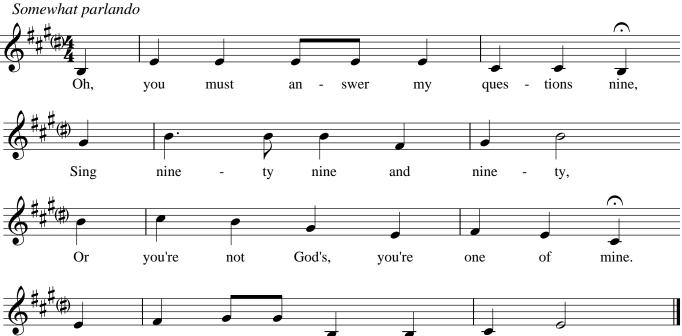
The Devil's Nine Questions

Informant/Performer: Mrs. Texas Gladden Salem, VA, 1941

Source: Library of Congress AFS 5231 A1 Collected by Alan Lomax





wea

2. What is whiter than the milk? Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And what is softer than the silk? And you are the weaver's bonny.

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And

- 3. Snow is whiter than the milk, Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And down is softer than the silk, And I am the weaver's bonny.
- 4. Oh, what is higher than a tree? Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And what is deeper than the sea? And you are the weaver's bonny.
- 5. Heaven's higher than a tree, Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And Hell is deeper than the sea, And I am the weaver's bonny.
- 6. What is louder than a horn? Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And what is sharper than a thorn? And you are the weaver's bonny.

7. Thunder's louder than a horn, Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And death is sharper than a thorn, And I am the weaver's bonny.

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- 8. What's more innocent than a lamb? Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And what is meaner than womankind? And you are the weaver's bonny.
- 9. A babe's more innocent than a lamb, Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And the devil's meaner than womankind, And I am the weaver's bonny.
- 10. Oh you have answered my questions nine, Sing ninety-nine and ninety. And you are God's, you're none of mine. And you are the weaver's bonny.

Background Information

One of the oldest songs in the language - No. 1 in Professor Francis James Child's great collection of 305 English and Scottish ballads - it is still sung here in America. The most ancient manuscript - "song ballot" of this folk ballad "in a hand of about 1450," is in the Bodleian Library in England.

Richard Chase, American Folk Tales and Songs