

# The just or unjust

Religion



In reading Dante's *Inferno*, there were many just punishments that correlated with their punishments. There are three that stand out as just and equal to the sins that were committed. The fortune tellers, hypocrites and thieves are some examples of suitable punishments. The fortune tellers predicted the future and for a just punishment they have their heads on backwards, because they looked into the future and now they can only see what is behind them. The hypocrites posed as things that they weren't, so now in hell, they are in lead cloaks and can't pose as something they are not. Lastly, the thieves stole from people, now in hell their hands are bound by reptiles and they are in a pitch full of other reptiles. Dante gave the fortune tellers, hypocrites, and thieves a suitable and just punishment for their sin. First, *Bogia 4* is about the Fortune Tellers/Diviners. Their sin was to see into the future. The punishment for the fortune tellers was their heads were turned backwards. They now can't see ahead of them, which is a difficult thing to do. In this case, it is not really torture because it isn't painful and it correlates with their sin.

God would maybe encourage this as a punishment for those who try to look into the future. In the canto, Dante sees these people with their heads on backwards and the sight of them could possibly lead you to the conclusion of them being fortune tellers or diviners. Dante could have been cruel and made some kind of painful punishment that caused them agony, but he gave them one of which brings them no pain. It just makes their eternal life a struggle of not being able to see where they are heading.

Next, the hypocrites are punished accordingly to their sin. They acted as if they supported a topic, then turn around and say they don't support that same topic. This could have applied to people, politics, life lessons etc. Dante gives them the punishment of being in cloaks made of lead and walking in circles. This punishment is an acceptable consequence for being a hypocrite. The cloaks hide them from everyone and they can't mislead people. This seems to be a possible God encouraged punishment for these people.

It would be a little hard to tell what sin the people committed in this canto, but if it were pondered, one could come to understand why Dante chose this punishment for these people. The thieves also have a just punishment for their sin. They are stuck in a pit full of reptiles while their hands are bound behind their backs with snakes. During their entire life they used their hands to steal and commit crimes. Now that they are in hell, they have their hands tied behind their backs so they can't be used. With their hands immobile, they can't steal from anyone ever again.

God would encourage this because back in the medieval times they had the saying of "an eye for an eye". They stole with their hands and now their hands are basically stolen from them. Dante give the fortune tellers, hypocrites, and thieves a suitable and just punishment for their sin. In conclusion, Dante picked acceptable punishments for the sins committed by these people. God might find these consequences suitable in that they go along with the sins. Dante didn't place these people here just because he thought they should or out of hate, he put them there with a just punishment.