

Replacing Gideons Bible Brings Backlash for England Hotel Owner

Although he insists it was “purely for fun,” a hotel owner in Northwest England recently came under fire for switching out the Bible for a steamy, secular novel in its 40 guest rooms.

Damson Dene Hotel owner Jonathan Denby insists that removing the Gideons Bible in favor of E.L. James’ *Fifty Shades of Grey* was not made due to any deep philosophical reasons. He told that it was done “just because the novel is so popular.”

“Because everybody is reading *Fifty Shades of Grey*, we thought it would be a hospitable thing to do, to have this available for our guests, especially if some of them were a little bit shy about buying it because of its reputation,” Denby said.

The Damson Dene is located near England’s scenic Lake District, near the town of Crosthwaite. Denby bought the hotel from a Methodist group 10 years ago, and had been contemplating as to what to do with the Gideons Bibles that were placed in the rooms previously.

Fifty Shades of Grey has sold more than 31 million copies worldwide and is known for its graphic sexual nature. Denby told that he himself had not read the book.

A local priest has been vocal of the hotel’s choice to switch out the Bibles.

“It’s a great shame that Bibles have been removed from rooms and very inappropriate to have been replaced by an explicit erotic novel,” Rev. Michael Woodcock of St. Mary’s Church in Croswaithe told *The Westmorland Gazette*. “The Bible remains a source of comfort and inspiration that many people do find

helpful.”

Denby said he has received emails from people in the United States “quoting Scriptures to us and suggesting that it would be a good thing to put the Bible back.”

“People in the States feel much more strongly,” he said.

Denby said that the hotel would accommodate travelers who want to read the Bible, and that copies are available at the Damson Dene reception desk.