

Ian McKellen 'Proudly' Rips Leviticus 18:22 Out of All Bibles

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Note to hotel managers: unless you want it to be altered forever, remove that Bible from Sir Ian McKellen's bedside drawer before he shows up.

In a Q&A with **Details** magazine, the openly gay 'Lord of the Rings' star admits to a habit of tearing out the Bible passage that condemns homosexuality -- Leviticus 18:22 -- every time he finds one in his hotel room. The passage: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." "I'm not proudly defacing the book," he asserts, "but it's a choice between removing that page and throwing away the whole Bible."

McKellen says his actions have inspired others to do the same. "I got delivered a package of 40 of those pages that had been torn out by a married couple I know. They put them on a bit of string so that I could hang it up in the bathroom."

The actor, who didn't come out of the closet until he was 49, talks openly about hiding his sexuality in order to build a successful career. "Acting was a means to publicly display my emotions in a way that was illegal for me to do as a private person."

He adds: "It was horrible living this secret life. You could feel a little bit what it was like to be a Jew in central Europe during a certain period. It was horrible."

Asked if he had ever considered getting married, McKellen says the act "never crossed my mind that it'd ever be possible for me."

"That's the scar that I and so many others bear -- we believed ourselves to be second-rate citizens for so long, the idea of being able to say 'This is my husband, these are my children' was not an option. I remember Tom Stoppard saying to me when I came out, 'I feel so sorry for you, because you'll never have children.' These days I would say, 'Well, why not, Tom?' But 20 years ago I accepted his judgment."

<http://www.popeater.ca/2009/11/02/ian-mckellen-bible-leviticus-1822/>