



## A Rabbi's Message to Mr. Gibson

*By Rabbi Ariel Bar Tzadok  
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August 3, 2006. Less than a week ago now, Mr. Gibson got drunk, got caught driving drunk and then got caught spewing drunken anti-semitic tirades. So what? Many people say many things when they are under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol loosens the tongue. Mr. Gibson might indeed harbor anti-semitic feelings. However, let us all put all this into a proper context.

Mr. Gibson might indeed be an anti-Semite. This comes as no surprise to many. Yet, then again, Mr. Gibson is not America's only latent anti-Semite. There are millions of others just like him, and millions others who are worse. Mr. Gibson is not a skinhead or a Nazi.

Millions of our fellow Americans are prejudice and bigots, each in their own form. There are many millions of Americans who hate Blacks, who hate Hispanics and even many more millions who hate Whites (like Mr. Gibson himself). I am even aware of a number of Protestants who hate Catholics (like Mr. Gibson).

What we learn from this is simple. Hatred knows no bounds. It is an evil that can stir in the heart of anyone, regardless of one's race, religion, color or ethnic origin.

Mr. Gibson has publicly condemned his drunken tirade. I cannot judge Mr. Gibson's sincerity, but at least he has gone public and condemned his own remarks, speaking out against his own latent prejudices. This is to his credit, regardless of those who wish to say he is doing this to save his career. With all the money he already has, there really is not much he stands to lose.

Mr. Gibson has spoken out. Kudos to him for doing so. How many other anti White, anti Black, anti Hispanic and anti-Semitic individuals who we all know so well from the media have gone public to denounce their emotional hatred and prejudice? None that I know of. On the contrary, most take every public opportunity to flame the fires of their personal prejudices and never seek to abate them.

Mr. Gibson does not belong to any public organization that embraces and publicly teaches anti-Semitism. No one has ever seen him wrapped in a Nazi flag or saluting Hitler. Is he an anti-Semite? Yes? Is he a big one? Maybe, maybe not. What he is not is a public one. This makes him no different from



millions of others all across America just as private or low key about their bigotries.

Do not stand up to condemn Mr. Gibson without also condemning countless other millions, each for their own prejudices. In addition, do not forget to start by first looking in the mirror and asking yourself which group is it that you hate or hold a prejudice?

This is America. Prejudice is not illegal here. We cannot prosecute someone because of how they feel. We can and do however condemn and prosecute actions and behavior. Mr. Gibson is guilty of DUI, and he will be punished for it. As for his anti-Semitism, he is entitled under American law to express his opinions; as long as he does not cross the boundaries and call for acts of violence, and that, he has never done, unlike countless others who have.

Mr. Gibson has other issues he needs to address; his personal lack of discipline that led him to drink in the first place is a good place to start. As a counselor and as a Jew, I wish I had the opportunity to work with Mr. Gibson, I believe I could honestly help him with all his demons. Although my phone number is readily available, I will not wait for his call. And that is too bad...

You see, many anti-Semites unfortunately look at the behavior of many a wanton Jew and hate us all because of them. Indeed, this collective condemnation is also equally applied to others as well. How many hate all Hispanics, all Blacks and all Whites, because THEY are ALL this or that?

No one group is ALL anything. Every group has their good and their bad apples. Let us strive to get rid of the bad apples in every bushel regardless of color, race or religion, so that the remaining apples can stay fresh and good.

Mr. Gibson, I am sorry you are having these present troubles. I am sorry that you are now being used by so many political agendas. I, for one, do not condemn you. I feel sorry for you and I want to believe there is really is a spark of good in you, that can come out of all this. I will not hold my breath, but if you would ever be willing to speak with a Rabbi, privately and confidentially, I would be happy to take your call.