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Abstract
This is a film review of *God's Slave* (2013), directed by Joel Novoa.

Author Notes
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God's Slave (2013) is the story of Ahmed, a Kuwaiti Muslim who witnessed the murder of his father by Jewish terrorists and David, an Israeli agent who witnessed the death of his brother who was killed by a Muslim terrorist bomb. Written by Fernando Butazzoni and directed by Joel Novoa, the movie focuses on the conflicting goals of Ahmed and David. Ahmed is given deep cover in Argentina. He works as a doctor, gets married, and has a son, all the while waiting for the day he will be called upon to commit some atrocity. That day comes and Ahmed is ordered to blow up a synagogue at just the time it will be filled with worshipers. David is an Israeli agent who is to do "whatever" it takes to prevent acts of terrorism. Both go about their tasks methodically and fanatically, motivated by their past traumas.

One way to understand the movie is to see it as a statement about violence. Violence begets violence in a never ending cycle. The violence witnessed by both Ahmed and David motivates their own contributions to the continuing cycle of violence. It is the cycle of violence that must be broken and the movie also shows what a daunting task the breaking of the cycle can be—one step forward, sometimes two steps backward.

As stories go, this is a good one—filled with heart pounding drama and characters for whom we feel sympathy, even when their actions are repulsive. There are a number of twists and turns that keep your attention and move the plot

forward at a frenetic pace. Will David be able to stop Ahmed's effort to blow up the synagogue? I will not describe more of the plot. You should enjoy the movie's surprises for yourself.

If this was all that could be said about the movie, it would be a strong recommendation to see the film. But, there is more. At just the moment that Ahmed has driven his bomb filled van to the synagogue, he hesitates and calls his handler. His handler tells him that "Allah is calling you." And, "Allah is asking for you to do it." But Ahmed responds: "It's not Allah, it's you who are asking for," and "God is not asking me for anything." In less than thirty seconds, the movie raises the issue of what it means to be God's slave. What does God tell us to do? How do we know what God wants from us? How much of what we do in the name of God is really what we want to do ourselves? How often do we use God as our excuse for acting on our own desires?

Although these questions arise in the film in relation to the impending violence, these are questions that can be asked in any situation and asked of people of all faiths. It is a fundamental question of religion. Is God telling us to hate homosexuals or is such hate a product of our own homophobia? Is God telling us to convert others to our religious views or is evangelism something that meets our own psychological needs? Is it really God that tells us to marry a particular person? Does God tell us to prosper or to sell all that we have and give it to the poor? All of these questions and many more are raised by the film.

In addition the movie raises the question of how we know what God tells us to do. Do we actually hear the voice of God? Do we feel moved to act in one way or another? Do sacred texts tell us what we must do? These are basic questions of religion and how we answer them determines what kind of religious person we are. When Ahmed says: "It's not Allah, it's you who are asking for," the movie becomes a fundamental challenge to how we behave. The movies becomes a challenge to our becoming "God's slave."