



January 2021

The Touch of the Master's Hand

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Recommended Citation

Blizek, William L. (2021) "The Touch of the Master's Hand," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 25 : Iss. 1 , Article 26.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol25/iss1/26>

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The Touch of the Master's Hand

Abstract

This is a film review of the short film, *The Touch of the Master's Hand* (2020), directed by Gregory Barnes.

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Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film and is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. He is also the editor of the *Continuum Companion to Religion and Film* (2009).



The Touch of the Master's Hand (2020), dir. Gregory Barnes

Elder Hyde is at a Mormon conference in Mexico. He is about to participate in his monthly worthiness interview with Presidente Packard. Just as it appears that he has passed his test, Elder Hyde confesses his addiction to pornography and his regular masturbation behavior. The pornography he watches is the movie, *Avatar*.

The Presidente tells him that our bodies are tiny factories that produce life. Every now and then, they produce an excess of life. The Lord helps release the excess of life during the night through a wet dream. The dream occurs without help and without resistance.

But there is something you should never do—try to release the excess yourself. Elder Hyde then reads from the Book of Mormon that after being baptized soldiers buried their weapons of war, for peace. The Presidente tells Elder Hyde that he should bury his weapon, which Elder Hyde does by breaking the video disc of *Avatar*. Next we see Elder Hyde baptizing an aspiring Mormon.

Is the message of the movie that it is very difficult to escape the strong grip of Mormonism, or is the message that the Mormon view of masturbation is silly and unrealistic? Maybe both are messages of the movie.