

Justice League (2017)

Rated PG-13. Running time: 2 hours 1 min.

Our content ratings (1-10): Violence 5; Language 2; Sex/Nudity 2.

Our star rating (1-5): 3

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds
of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke,*

to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Isaiah 58:6

When the studio rep asked for my opinion after the screening of this film, I replied, "LOUD and BIG." And so it is, filled from beginning to end with enough noise and action for two ordinary movies.

It begins with the world, Bruce Wayne, and Lois Lane (a barely used Amy Adams) mourning the death of Superman (in *BvS*), but of course a new Super Nasty looms on the horizon, so Bruce/Batman, who has already linked up with Diana Prince/Wonder Woman, sets out to recruit other superheroes for his Justice League.

His posse includes the Flash, a.k.a. Barry Allen (Ezra Miller), a geeky teenager able to move with almost the speed of light; Aquaman, a.k.a. Arthur Curry (Jason Momoa), a muscular, tattooed holdover from the Viking era able to swim with and talk to the fish; and Cyborg, a.k.a. Victor Stone (Ray Fisher), a once destroyed human put back together with machine parts. And helping out from time to time is Bruce Wayne's ever-faithful valet Alfred (Jeremy Irons). Plenty of mayhem ahead as the Justice League enters into battle against

the ancient evil being Steppenwolf (Ciarán Hinds), who leads an army of winged parademons. He is searching for three “mother-boxes” that when brought together will give him the power to—

Although there is not as much brooding as in *BvsS*, there is still plenty of dark foreboding in the person of Bruce Wayne. Flash provides much of the youthful “Gee Whiz” that Spiderman does in the recent Marvel film, as per the following exchange:

Bruce Wayne: I’m putting together a team of people with special abilities. See, I believe enemies are coming...

Barry Allen: Stop right there. I’m in.

Bruce Wayne: You are? Just like that?

Barry Allen: Yeah, I... I need... friends.

Bruce Wayne: Agreed.

Barry Allen: [holds up the batarang that Bruce had hurled at him] Can I keep this?

However, I think you’ll agree that the best part of the film is the expanded role of Gal Gadot’s Wonder Woman in the story, acting as a kind of den mother for the pack of half-grown males who still need to learn how to get along with one another. And then Superman (Henry Cavill) re-enters the picture. Like Mark Twain, reports of his demise were a bit premature. Oh, I know we saw him in his coffin and buried, but this is the D.C. Universe—talk about a *deus ex machina*! At least this unlikely event leads to a couple of the tenderest moments in the film, his reunion with Lois Lane and his mother Martha Kent. I also loved the moment when they are brought back by Bruce Wayne to the Kent home that a bank had taken over, and one of them asks how he got the house from the bank, and Bruce replies that he bought the bank.

IMDB reports that director Zack Snyder was given \$300 million

for this bloated adventure fantasy. I marvel that so much money should be squandered on what amounts to so little! Give me a little film like *Lucky* or *The Florida Project* any time!

This review with a set of discussion questions will be in the December 2017 issue of Visual Parables.