

Avengers Endgame & Infinity Lessons

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What a ride! *Avengers Endgame* starts peacefully in an idyllic country backyard with a bar-b-que. Hawkeye has a family, until ... the world changes. Drawn into the bleak, seemingly hopeless world, we are teased with the dilemma left after the brute Thanos killed half the beings in the universe.

Filmed in tandem with *Avengers Infinity Wars* (itself a \$400m production), the *End Game* picks up the saga of the six Infinity Stones: Soul, Time, Space, Mind, Reality, and Power. Each has an aspect of infinity to them in the Marvel world and in our world.



Dr. Strange possesses the Time Stone, and some reluctant time travel becomes a necessity later as the Avengers find a way to mend hostilities, face their failures and fears, and develop another plan to try to defeat the evil Thanos, whose name is from the Greek root for “death.” The heartless hulk Thanos, in his own crooked mind, is trying to help the universe survive over-population and resource depletion. He is the first New Green Deal maker.

Yes, you can enjoy *Endgame* if you have not seen the previous 21 Marvel movies, but only if you like sci-fi fantasy. *Endgame* is already breaking box office records. Opening day made the most in history at \$156 million. It sold more reserved tickets than any, and some theaters stayed open 72 hours straight to feed the demand. AP reported an estimated hit of \$350 domestically and \$1.2 billion globally—otherworldly records—making more in one weekend than *Aquaman*, *Skyfall*, and *Dark Knight Rises* did in their entire runs! USA Today just reported that *Endgame* is one of five movies to ever reach the \$2 billion mark, and that now it is second worldwide only to *Avatar* with \$2.8 billion. That is, *Avatar* reached \$2 billion in 47 days of release compared with 11 for *Endgame*!

To appreciate the unique magnitude, you must feel the fun in the relationships. Stan Lee even makes a cameo as a news reporter, and rightly so, for he is the genius who fathered most of the Marvel Comic characters decades ago.

If not familiar, you can catch up a bit and still grab a load of *Endgame* treasure if you binge these six: *Captain America* (2018), *Thor* (2011), *Guardians of the Galaxy* (2014), *Iron Man* (2008), *Avengers* (2012) and *Avengers Infinity Wars* (2018). Especially *Iron Man* and *Infinity Wars*.

Guardians is a hoot with my favorite racoon, Rocket, and his crafty nonchalant wit.

Dr. Bruce Banner, *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), plays a crucial role, and if you know his story, too, the innuendos will grow big and green. If you have seen *Spider-Man* (2012), you will appreciate the web between him and Iron Man, aka Tony Stark, an adored father figure.

All that to say this—the Avengers are a family of super heroes who come together to save our world that often does not appreciate or understand them. Their quirks and sarcasm, jibes and

challenges creatively mesh. Though I saw many, I regret not having seen all the Marvel movies prior to *Endgame*. Unlike any movie I have seen, this brought together the largest multi-faceted history of characters. That is the treasure. Spider-Man only appears for a few minutes throughout the three-hour epic, yet you appreciate his Iron Man mentor for having already walked through the youthful life of the young Spider-Man in several movies. Every significant character has a larger history in another film and comic book.

As the Avengers hunt the universe for the Infinity Stones, there is a poignant, touching 1940 scene with Captain America, and Iron Man—incognito in civilian clothes—says, “All the money in the world cannot buy one second of time.” The deeply layered meaning is inescapable.

For those who have seen all 21 movies and read the comic books—just as many have followed all the Star Trek and Star Wars sagas—those fortunate fans will be wound into this *Endgame* in a wonderfully and masterly meshing of rich old characters made so very life-like, especially in the super Cinemark XD-3D.

Best of all—these super heroes are so very human.

Each Infinity Stone has a special power, and one must have great strength to handle them. Did you get that? One *must* have great strength to truly handle an Infinity Stone! And the power of each stone is magnified as more stones come together. The stones existed as singularities before the Big Bang, and after the Bang they came to represent six parts of the universe: Soul, Time, Space, Mind, Reality, and Power.

Thanos has the large glove, the Gauntlet, and each stone has a place. When all six finally attach to the Gauntlet, well then, Thanos becomes all powerful.

Fantasy, you say? Yet the creative Marvel minds make more out of the Big Bang than evolutionary theory has done. As the Avengers are propelled into the drama to save the world, we, too, are touched each day by the powers of the six stones in magnificent metaphor as each of us *live* our lives out in this world integrated with all six—dare I say—in an infinity of varieties.

It takes a team, a family to handle this world. Can't do it alone.

My heart and *Soul* yearns for more *Time* in the *Space* that I have, to live and learn, while my *Mind* frets and works hard to adjust and make more comfortable my *Reality* with the *Power* that I can manage—in infinitely unique varieties—just as you do. As we all do.

As a Christian, these movies stretch my imagination, as these all-too-human super heroes play the role of avatars of catharsis and purgation, as each grapples with their courage in the pursuit of justice, freedom, and the American way of dignifying each person, no matter how odd.

Indeed, just like us—or *as* us—they strive to make sense out of a hostile, Thanos-death-infested world.

Enjoy! I did and will watch it again down the road of Time.

Just Marvel-ous!



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