Opens Tonight

‘Ben-Hur’ Answers Moviegoers’ Hopes

By REED MARTIN

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The most honored picture of all time begins its extended run at the Tower Theater tonight at 8:00. Unlike most Hollywood extravaganzas which suffer from the mishandling of myriads of small details, Ben-Hur has attained a unity of perfection. As indicated by the 11 Academy Awards which range from direction to musical scoring to supporting roles, this film is unsurpassed in all the factors that contribute to a movie.

MORE IMPORTANT, and a very refreshing contrast to past Hollywoodian attempts at grandeur, this is a movie with a definite and worthwhile meaning—one that no member of the audience can help but understand as he is swept up in the spectacle of this film masterpiece.

Sub-titled “A Tale of the Christ,” the story begins in Anno Domini and continues through the crucifixion. It becomes a tale of faith, and what it can do for a man and a race. As a Prince of the Jews, Judah Ben-Hur chooses opposition to his best friend and the Roman rule in Judea that he represents. His fate for this stand is inevitable persecution and imprisonment.

THE MAJORITY of the picture treats the man in his unmerited suffering, loss of position and family, and the normal reactions of bitterness and resentment. At the severest depth of his doubt, his faith is regenerated by the Man on the Cross who restores the purpose in Ben-Hur’s existense. Because of the taste in presentation, the film transcends a commercial for Christianity and becomes a strong plea for all faiths.

The strength of the acting might be best explained by the fact that many minutes elapse without dialogue. The 45 major parts are so much more than adequately portrayed that emotions are easily communicated with no need for words.

FOR THOSE WHO demand action in their movies, I need mention no more than the Chariot Race, the most singularly spectacular part of any movie this reviewer has ever seen. There was no mistake made in the presentation of Academy Awards—Ben-Hur is the answer to every moviegoer’s hopes.