

# Megillah Gorilla as told to Ucaoimhu

Yes, I'm a gorilla (you're not yet drunk enough to confuse kings Ahasuerus and Kong) and on this zany Purim I have somehow shown up in the (usually gorilla-free) **Book of Esther**. In fact:

(A) All *five* Megillot currently have much-valued visitors from elsewhere. Three Megillot affect Down answers before entry:

**1. Ruth.** To sustain the titular gleaner, some answers contain crops (specifically, one or more seeds) that will become cut (in one of two ways) before entry.

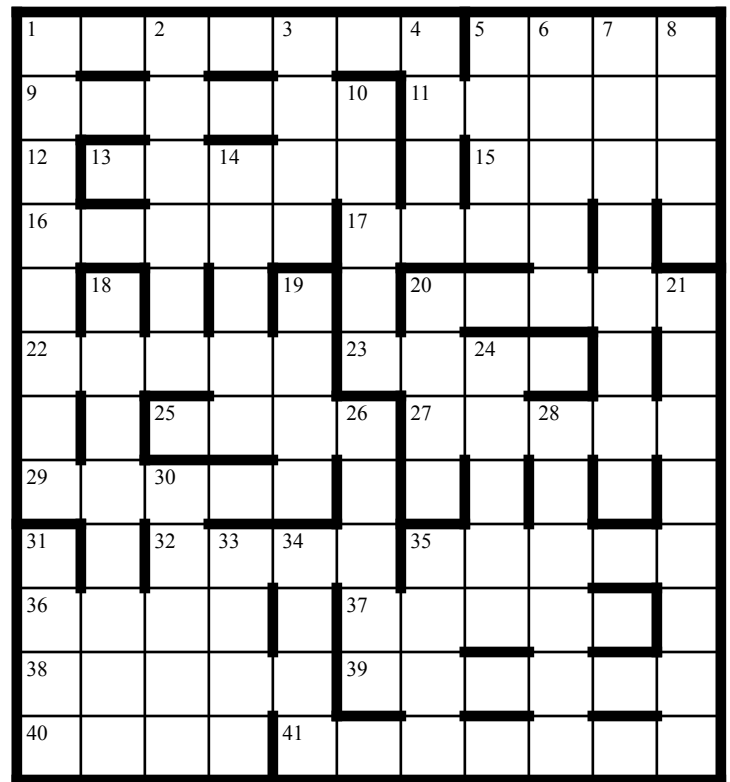
**2. Lamentations.** Alas, some answers will be disheartened, and then the most elevated characters will be upset and brought low.

**3. Ecclesiastes.** As in Pete Seeger's song, in some answers three letters (treated as lowercase) turn, turn, turn clockwise 90° or 180°. (Note: a and e are not considered inversions of each other.)

(Altered entries will include two capitalized words and a phrase; also, each altered entry is noncryptically clued by some series of words in the corresponding clue.)

If an alteration above applies to *n* answers, take the *n*th letter of each of those *n* clues in clue order to see the visitor in that book. Also, apply the same procedure to the *rest* of the Down clues (whose answers are entered unaltered) to find the visitor in the **Song of Songs**, in one possible English translation; then apply alterations 1–3 in order to that term (for 1, making the choice that restores balance) to get another (very different) translation.

(B) In each of twelve Across clues, one word contains an extra letter that must be deleted before solving; in clue order, these will spell out the letters that spell out the Hebrew term that (A) translates two ways. Also, if the word with the extra letter is the *n*th word of the clue, note the *n*th letter of the answer; in clue order, (1) the *n*th letters selected by words with *nonfinal* extra



letters will say again where that visitor is, and (2) those selected by words with *noninitial* extra letters will say where *all five* of us visitors come from. (To narrow things down still further, note what 24 Down says about certain royalty.)

(C) In each of the ten other Across clues, the wordplay yields a letter string with one extra letter. In clue order, the *nonfinal* extra letters will describe one or two of us visitors; the *noninitial* extra letters will name the person to whom tradition ascribes *all* of us visitors, and two of something else in this puzzle.

## ACROSS

1. Send away stick fop (ack!) put near leader of fops (4 3)
5. Jay, help tense SNL performer Colin (4)
9. Ferrous metal almost ripped blue Russian money (6, *var.*)
11. County whose soil's Irish soda in gravel, out here (5)
13. More than one key is outwardly loose, consequently (5)
15. I note lav that's moved four steps on (2 2)
16. Volvo ATV last seen (twice) behind Dot evokes retort (2 3)
17. Blueprint detail S-150 describes gym (4)
20. *10* actress Derek hugs ripped *Star Trek* actor Spiner (5)
22. All about the Rs in reamer's name on a chair (5)
23. Novel making the Spanish shut up and eat (4)
25. Reptile burger ultimately eaten by co-host (4)
27. Person having knights out back read about Troy (5)
29. Mark Laurel takes Mae as a subject (5)
32. Wafter's shape when frozen in a glass bear cage in back (4)
35. Successfully played wife taken by cowgirl/author Anaïs (3 2)
36. Cookie containing small, valuable rocks (4)
37. Exhausted and stunned after imbibing one pint (5)
38. *Fight Narrator's* cyan set (5)
39. Gets spotted loess from south Nebraska area near Kansas (6)
40. Page left without "glede," "BlackBerry," etc. (4, *abbr.*)
41. Gym in club near Descartes and Laurel (3 4)

## DOWN

1. Dr. O mistakenly preps tubelike items that poke into ears, say
2. A Belgian's way to start grappling to get out of holds [NI3]
3. Fat old pope who met Attila the Hun
4. Soleil Moon of *Punky Brewster's Off For Turkey* rose, finally
5. "Word preceding *de vivre*"? I will enter "coffee"
6. One holding head of cat up when one would expect (2 *ws.*)
7. Wing joint on a bird paddling to a reporter is healing
8. Some very cold stuff Roosevelt might sit on for an instant
10. Recall a Scottish monster ignoring one German city
14. Cold one taking run upon run makes turn
18. Groovy — a luter that's stumbled is a bad credit risk
19. Has electricity powering it supplied by Current Kid (2 *ws.*)
20. Yeshivah PO queuer will (right to left) frame Hebrew letter
21. English dynasty mostly hide from Italian east of waterways
24. Alternatively scan bee barn of folk 5870 km from Shropshire whose queen is from the same part of (B2) we are (*var.*) [NI3]
26. CO, say, initially gnaws at layers of paint
28. Cord is caroler's bane, keeping tenor above low E
30. Champion left a high-speed Amtrak train
31. Dee-Dee claims that hurts Elwood P. in the show *Harvey*
33. Terpsichore or Melpomene's less masculine exploits
34. One nickname for a UK concern airing shows live both ways
35. Mega-frequent utterance of egotists near Moselle-like rivers!