Caesar’s Assassination

Julius Caesar was a General and Senator of Rome. After leading his army into Northern Italy he plunged the Republic into Civil War. He chased his enemy, Pompey from Italy, to Greece and eventually to Egypt. He defeated all of his rivals and established himself as ruler of the Roman Republic. On the 17th of March he declared himself dictator for life, which set him against the rest of the senators who strongly disliked the fact that Caesar was adorning himself with so much power.

A group of sixty senators got together and made a plan to kill Caesar to stop him. There were several ideas put forward about how they should murder Caesar, but the majority favoured killing him while he sat in the Senate, where he would be by himself as non-Senators would not be admitted, and the many conspirators could hide their daggers beneath their togas. This plan was the one that was to be carried out.

Many of Caesar’s friends had heard rumours of a plot to kill him and warned him not to go to the Senate. Even the priests with whom Caesar carried out sacrifices begged him not to go to the Senate as the omens were bad. But Caesar went to the Senate anyway.

The conspirators all stood around Caesar as he entered and greeted the Senate; the moment arrived for the assassination to begin. All the conspirators quickly unsheathed their daggers and rushed at him. The first man struck him with the point of the blade on the left shoulder, a little above the collar-bone. Caesar rose to defend himself, and in the uproar another man shouted out in Greek to his brother. The brother heard him and drove his sword into Caesar’s ribs. After a moment, Cassius made a slash at his face, and Decimus Brutus stabbed him in the side. While one conspirator was trying to attack Caesar he missed and struck Marcus Brutus on the hand. Minucius also hit out at Caesar and hit another conspirator in the thigh.

The number of the wounds caused Caesar to fall at the foot of Pompey’s statue. Everyone wanted to have had some part in the murder, and there was not one of them who failed to strike his body as it lay there, until, wounded thirty-five times, he died.

Questions

Why didn’t some of the Senators like Caesar?

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Who told Caesar not to go to the Senate? (Tick all that are correct)

His friends

All the other senators

The priests

The public

How many times was Caesar stabbed? At the base of which statue was he stabbed?

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