**Appian: The Civil Wars - *On the Gracchi***

*Appian was a Roman citizen born in Alexandria, Egypt around the year 95. He lived in Rome and worked as a lawyer, arguing cases before emperor Antonius Pius. He wrote several histories of Rome that have become the main sources for modern historians studying ancient Rome. However, some historians have criticized how he used his sources to support his conservative views in regards to imperial Rome and his critical views of Republican Rome. In the following excerpt, he writes about the death of Tiberius Gracchus.*

At the coming of summer the announcement of the election of tribunes was made, and as the day for voting drew near, it was clear that the wealthy were vigorously aiding the election of those most opposed to Gracchus. Fearing that misfortune would come upon him if he should not be re-elected for the next year, Gracchus sent to his friends in the fields to attend the assembly, but as their time was taken up with the harvest he was forced, when the day fixed for the voting was at hand, to depend upon the plebeians of the city. So he went about canvassing each one to elect him tribune for the next year, on account of the jeopardy [danger] he had put himself in on their account… The wealthy held that it was not constitutional for a man to hold the office twice in succession… Since there was a deal of wrangling [arguments] on this point, Gracchus, who was being bested, postponed the election until the next day. In deep despondency he robed himself in black, though still in office, and led his son about the forum, introducing him to each man and putting him in their care, as if he himself were about to die at the hands of his foes.

The poor were afflicted with great grief, and justly so, both on account of themselves, for they thought that they would no longer dwell in a free state under equitable laws, but were to be reduced to slavery by the rich, and on account of Gracchus personally, who had brought upon himself such peril for their sakes. Therefore, they all escorted him with lamentations [sorrow] to his home at nighttime, and bade him take heart for the next day. Gracchus gathered courage, and calling together his friends before daylight, imparted to them a sign to be made for a resort to violence. Then he placed himself in the temple on the Capitoline hill, where the election was to be held, and put himself in the middle of the comitia [legislative assembly]. As he was checked by the other tribunes and by the wealthy, who would not permit the votes to be taken on this question, he gave the sign. A sudden uproar arose from those who saw it and the resort to arms followed. Part of the faction of Gracchus took their stand about him like a bodyguard. Others that had girded themselves, laid hold of the fasces and staves [symbols of Roman power] in the hands of lictors [holders of fasces and staves] and shattered them into pieces. The rich were thrown out of the comitia with so much tumult and so many wounds that the tribunes rushed from their seats in consternation [alarm], and the priests closed the doors of the temple. Many ran hither and thither and cast wild reports abroad. Some said that Gracchus had impeached all the other tribunes and this was given credence because none of them were in sight. Others said that he had declared himself tribune for the next year without a vote.

Under these conditions the senate came together at the Temple of Fides [Faith]. It is astounding to me that they never thought of electing a dictator in this crisis, though they had often been defended by the rule of an absolute magistrate amid such periods of danger. Though this expedient [helpful] had been found very serviceable in ancient times, few thought of it either then or afterwards. After coming to the decision they arrived at, they marched to the Capitol, the high priest, Cornelius Scipio Nasica, at their head, crying out in a sonorous voice, “Let those who would save the state follow me.” He gathered the border of his toga around his head, either to attract a larger crowd to follow him by his peculiar appearance, or to make for himself, as it were, a helmet as a signal for violence to the spectators, or to hide from the gods what he was about to do. When he came to the temple and stepped forward against the adherents of Gracchus, they yielded to the prestige of so eminent a citizen, for they saw the senate behind him. The senators wrenched clubs from the very hands of the followers of Gracchus, or with pieces of torn-up benches or other things that had been brought for the use of the comitia, began mauling them and in hot pursuit, drove them over the precipice. In the riot many followers of Gracchus were killed and Gracchus himself, being seized near the temple, was slain at the door near the statues of the kings. All the corpses were thrown into the Tiber at night.

Thus died on the Capitol and while still tribune, Tiberius Gracchus, the son of the Gracchus who was twice consul and of Cornelia, the daughter of the Scipio that conquered Carthage. He lost his life because he followed up an excellent plan in too lawless a way. This awful occurrence, the first of the kind that took place in the public assembly, was never long without a new parallel thereafter. On the matter of the killing of Gracchus, the city was divided between grief and joy. Some sorrowed for themselves and him and bewailed the existing state of affairs, believing that the republic no longer existed, but had been usurped by coercion and violence. Others congratulated themselves that everything had turned out just as they wanted it to…

Ancient History Sourcebook: Appian: The Civil Wars - On the Gracchi." *Internet History Sourcebooks*. Ed. Oliver J. Thatcher. N.p., May 1998. Web. 29 Jan. 2014. <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/ancient/appian-civwars1.asp>

**Carefully read the gloss at the beginning of the reading. Consider the information in the gloss as you write at least one (1) question for each paragraph. When you have written your questions, identify 2-3 key words that you believe would give more insight about the purpose of the author. Explain why your key words are significant and what insight could be gained by its analysis.**