



The Letter of Lentulus

Edited by Noel Joshua Hadley

I understand, Oh Caesar! you wish to learn some things about the virtuous man named Iesus Christus, who the town considers like a prophet and like Dei, and who, his disciples say, is the Son of Dei, maker of heaven and earth.

Truthfully, Oh Caesar! wonderful things are heard about him every day that goes by. To explain it briefly, he resuscitates the dead and heals those who are sick. He is a medium size man, of benign looks, and greatest dignity, which is also reflected on his face, so that when a person is evaluating him, one infallibly feels the necessity of loving and fearing him.

His long hair down to his ears, has the color of ripe walnuts, and from there, falling down on his back, is of a brilliant and golden color. It is

divided on the middle of his head. Like the Nazarene fashion. His forehead is smooth and there are no wrinkles or spots on his face. The beard, which has the same color as the hair on his head, is curly and even though it is not long, is divided around the middle. His serious eyes possess the virtue of a solar ray. No-one can look at him steadily at the eyes.

When he speaks, admonishing, he inspires apprehension, but as soon as he is through reprimanding, he looks like he is crying. Even though he is solemn, he is very affable and amiable. It is said no-one has ever seen him laughing, but that he has been seen crying. Everyone finds his conversation affable and pleasant. Very few times he appears in public, and when he does, he is always very modest. He looks very noble. As for the rests, his mother is the most beautiful woman ever seen in these regions.

Oh, Caesar! if you wish to see him, like you requested once in writing, let me know, and I will send him over right away. He never undertook studies; nevertheless, he knows all sciences. He goes around barefoot and with his head uncovered. When he is seen at a distance, many laugh, but no sooner they approach him, they tremble, and admire him. It is said that never in these lands, has anyone ever seen a man like him.

The Hebrews assure they have never heard an indoctrination such as his. Many say he is Dei; others say his is Caesar's enemy. The bad Hebrews bother me a lot, but of Jesus it is said he has never displeased anyone; rather, his intentions are to please everyone. At any rate, Oh Caesar! I will execute any order I receive from you about him. In Yerushalayim, Indict 7 of the eleventh month.

PUBLIUS LENTUTIUS