

THE DIVINE COUNTENANCE OF CHRIST

—The testimony of Publius Lentulus—

A description of the ethical and physical characteristics of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ are found in an epistle written by Publius Lentulus, who was a ruler of Judaea, a predecessor of Pontius Pilate, and also a contemporary of Jesus Christ. This epistle was sent by him to the Senators of Rome, according to the common practice during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, in order for the governors of various regions to make known to the Roman elders and the citizens the most significant events that would take place within their jurisdictions. Behold what this ruler states:

“During our days there has appeared here a man named Jesus Christ, full of virtues, who still lives amongst us; he is called a prophet of the truth by the people, but by his followers he is called the ‘Son of God’! He resurrects the dead and heals all types of illnesses. He is a man of rather medium to tall stature, with a venerable appearance; he is such a man, that they who see him both love and fear him. His hair is the color of deep chestnut, straight, reaching his shoulders, upon which it waves into curls. He has his hair parted in the middle of his forehead according to the custom of the Nazarenes. His forehead is smooth and straight; his face is without wrinkle, embellished with a red color. His face is brave and pleasant. His nose and mouth are so perfect that no one can find any flaw with them. His beard is not long, but dense; the color of his beard is similar to that of his hair. His eyes are bluish green and most limpid, while his gaze is innocent and piercing. When he examines and reproaches he is very frightening; when he teaches and advises he is likeable, prudent, and sweet; during conversation he is pleasant, yet serious. He has never been seen laughing, but many times he has been seen crying. The symmetry of his body is exceptional; his hands and arms are noteworthy on account of their extreme thinness. Christ is the most-beautiful man in appearance among the men who have been born.”

An excerpt from *Christology*,
by Saint Nektarios of Pentapolis