



ANCIENTS

161-169 AD LUCIUS VERUS AV AUREUS NGC MS 5/5 - 4/5



Lucius Aurelius Verus was Roman emperor from 161 until his death in 169, alongside his adoptive brother Marcus Aurelius. He was a member of the Nerva-Antonine dynasty. Verus' succession together with Marcus Aurelius marked the first time that the Roman Empire was ruled by multiple emperors, an increasingly common occurrence in the later history of the Empire. Late in AD 136, the Emperor Hadrian adopted a handsome, but otherwise undistinguished aristocrat named Lucius Aurelius Commodus as his intended successor, giving him the name Aelius Caesar. The new heir already had a seven-year-old son, who received the name Lucius Verus, and the boy's place in the dynastic succession seemed secure.

But Aelius died of consumption only 16 months later, forcing Hadrian to adopt as his replacement another, rather more qualified senator, Antoninus Pius. Antoninus in turn adopted Lucius Verus and another youth of a good Spanish family, Marcus Aurelius. After Hadrian's death, Antoninus kept young Lucius in the background while he showed Marcus every preferment. Nevertheless, when Antoninus died in March, AD 161, Marcus Aurelius insisted that the Senate also grant Lucius Verus the title of Augustus, for the first time giving the Empire two theoretically coequal rulers. Marcus also betrothed his daughter Lucilla to Lucius, further cementing their family ties.

Rome AD 163-164. A glorious example of this attractive, evocative and historical type, with a magnificent portrait in sculptural high relief and blazing surfaces with light orange toning.

Obverse: L•VERVS AVG-ARMENIACVS, bare head of Verus right.

Reverse: TR P IIII-IMP II COS II, Lucius Verus seated left on curule chair set on raised platform, joined by Roman officer and Praetorian guardsman; Verus reaches out with right hand toward figure of King Soahemus standing left before platform and raising his right hand toward his head.

Additional Rarity: Commodus (AD 177-192). AV aureus NGC Gem MS 5/5 - 5/5 sold at auction on January 2018 for \$72,000

