

# Epicurus' Birthday 2023 - (The Most Comprehensive Picture Yet!)

**Post by "Don" of November 28, 2022 at 10:08 AM**

Honestly, I'm not as concerned with the floating Julian date as I am with nailing down Gamelion 20. And that's confirmed to my satisfaction. In light of that, celebrating annually on January 20 makes the most sense to me since that gets closest to the spirit of Epicurus's Will because (and I'm stating these as facts but anyone is welcome to contest if they like):

- Epicurus was born Gamelion 20.
- His birthday was celebrated annually during his life and after his death on Gamelion 20.
- The monthly assembly was established in honor of that 20th.
- The celebration of the 20th was lost for centuries and was not celebrated according to any calendar: Attic, Gregorian, or Julian.
- In modern times, we've decided to reestablish observance of the monthly 20th according to our calendar.
- The ancient Gamelion was roughly equal to the time of year we've divided into January (give or take a couple weeks).
- The ancients' celebration of Gamelion 20 was part of their regular monthly assemblies, just with added significance and ceremonies to celebrate the Founder's birth.
- Therefore, according to the custom set forth in Epicurus's Will by Epicurus, we can celebrate January 20 as Epicurus's Birthday and feel that we're honestly sticking to a time-honored tradition to the best of our ability.

Trying to pin down an exact Julian date in modern times for an event that took place 2,000+ years in the past is fraught with danger. In some ways, it's a "how many angels can dance on a pin" question. Even saying something like "Julius Caesar died on March 15" because he was assassinated on the Idēs of "March" is, at best, a rough approximation and convenient shorthand.

But don't misunderstand me! I think it's a fascinating exercise, and I fully support the idea of celebrating a movable observance of Epicurus's Birthday annually. I think that's a very cool exercise, and that's why I've "accepted" the Hellenic Month Established Per Athens website calculations as "good enough" for me on that count:

[HMEPA: Hellenic Month Established Per Athens temporary](#)

It's at least used by a modern Hellenic pagan group to celebrate their festivals, so if they are confident to use it for their re-constituted religion, I'm happy to use it for my purposes.

With the intercalated days and missing lists of Archons and the ancients' adding in days when the needed/wanted, it is well nigh impossible to say "this ancient event happened on March 15 and simply could NEVER have happened on March 14 or 16 in 44 BCE!! Furthermore, in 2022, that date exactly corresponds to March 16!!" It can't be done. Like I said, I think this is a fascinating, intriguing, enjoyable intellectual exercise, but there's no way - to my mind - that anyone is going to be 100% iron-clad \*right\* in these calculations.

For me, January 20 is the best date to celebrate the Founder's Birthday that respects the ancient tradition in keeping with Epicurus's wishes as set down in his will. We could honor his wishes and establish a custom for modern Epicureans by observing the Annual 20th on that date.