

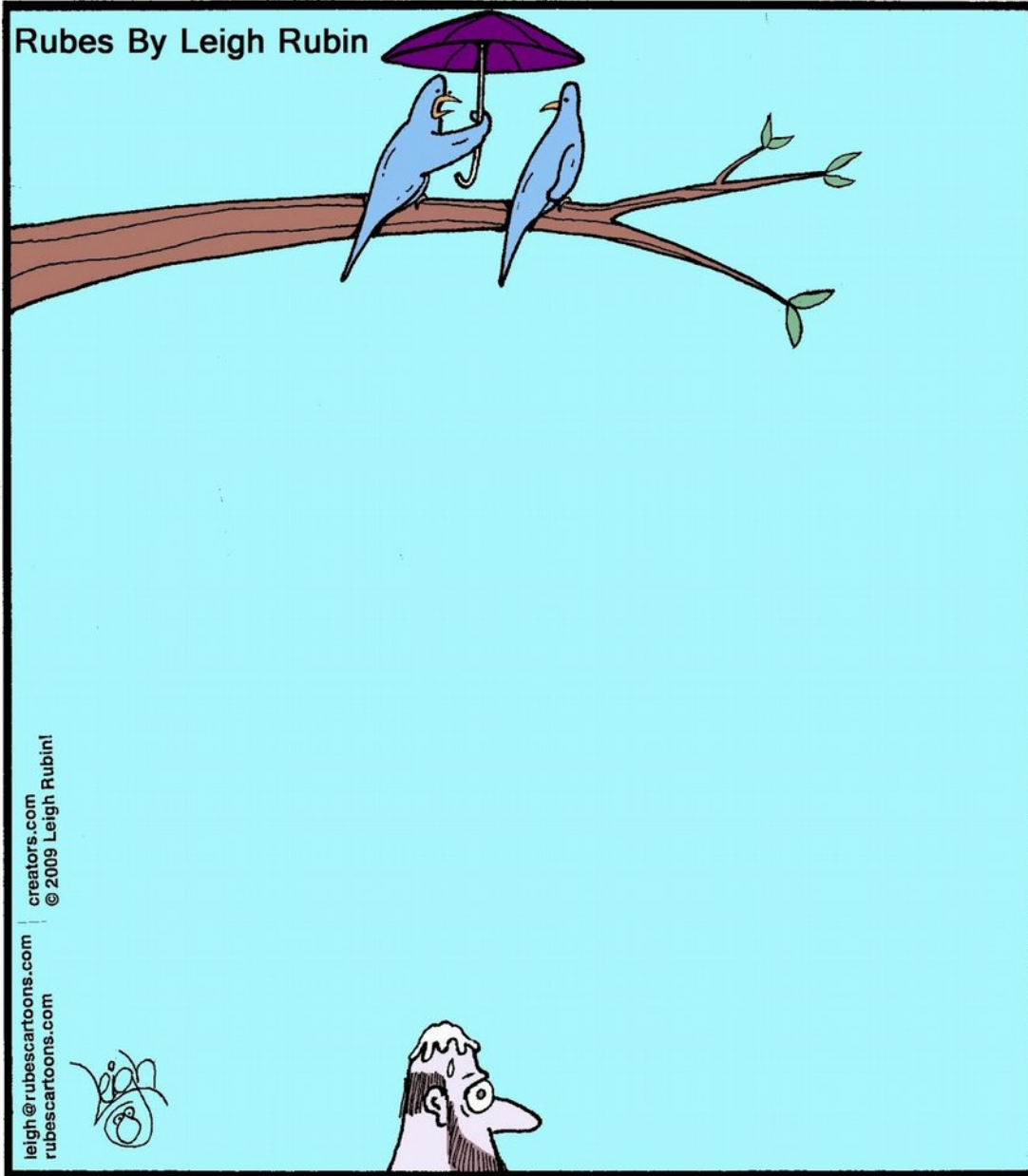
Karma & Rebirth in Early Buddhism 1: **Mythbusting**



Some basics

- Kamma is intention/choice
(*cetanāhaṃ kammaṃ vadāmi*)
- Kamma means “action”, not fate
- Kamma is a natural principle, not retribution
- *Kamma* in Pali, *karma* in Sanskrit: same meaning
- Distinguishing kamma in Early Buddhism

Rubes By Leigh Rubin



"Hey, all I'm saying is if there's any truth at all to the law of karma, I want all my bases covered."

The meaning of kamma

- Why is it important?
- Why so popular?

Kamma offers a way of understanding the moral universe in terms of natural principles.



*That man just stole my handbag!
What are you going to do?!*

*Wait for something
really bad to
happen to him.*

KARMA MAN TO THE RESCUE

PODAN
TIRARO
4.29.07

BIZARRO.COM

DISLIKING FEATURES

Myth № 1

Everything is due to karma

- Multiple causes, multiple effects
- Non-deterministic
- Choice & spiritual development
- Disabilities, disadvantage, and disaster

I've been such
a terrible mother...
he's all dreamy and
sensitive and
loving...

Don't be so
hard on yourself.
It could be a
birth defect.



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Myth № 2

There is no in-between state

- What the suttas say
- What reports of experience say
- What analogy and common sense say

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Myth № 3

Rebirth is *only* psychological

- Psychology, metaphor, and cosmology
- What the suttas say

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Myth № 4

Collective karma

- “I am the owner of my karma...”
- Shared responsibility
- Vicarious atonement

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Myth № 5

The last mind moment determines your rebirth

- “Mind moment” is a late Abhidhamma concept.
- What of the kamma we make every day?
- Kamma is ethical choice, not thought.
- Exceptional circumstances

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Myth № 6

Rituals are powerful karma

- Vedic meaning of karma
- The Buddha's attitude to ritual
- Use of karma in the Sangha

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Myth № 7

Mahāmoggallāna's death

- What the suttas say
- What the commentaries say

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Myth № 8

The law of attraction

- Power of positive thinking
- Manifesting realities
- Living in the real world

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Myth № 9

Karma is a cultural belief

- The Buddha and culture
- What do the suttas say?
- What were the cultural views of the time?
- What kind of fool do you think the Buddha was, anyway?

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Myth № 10

Consciousness enters the embryo at the moment of conception

- What do the suttas say?
- Time, rebirth, attachment

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Myth № 11

Transference of merit

- What the suttas say
- Transference vs. dedication
- Why do we do it?

$$L_v = L_p - R$$

$$t = 2x \sqrt{\frac{L}{g}}$$

$$\Delta V = V \beta \Delta T$$

PLAUSIBLE

pressure

displacement

$$\Delta s = \int \frac{1}{v} \frac{dQ}{dt}$$

Myth № 12

Birth as a woman is because of bad karma

- What do the suttas say
- Did the Buddha travel to the edge of reality itself, only to return and confirm our most primitive, harmful, and stupid prejudices?
- Stop slandering the Buddha!

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