

LEGEND AND FOLKLORE SYMBOLS: THE GREAT RAVEN

The Native American Raven is seen as the creator of the world, a hero, a messenger, a trickster and a thief. He blessed humanity with sunlight, but also with the pest of mosquitoes!

Among the different Native American tribes, the myths of Raven vary greatly, but it is thought he was born in primordial darkness and that he brought sunlight, tides, animals and vegetation to the Earth. It is said that when Raven brought light into the world, humans were so frightened that they scattered to all the corners of the Earth.

Friend or foe?


Raven is credited as both saviour and punisher. His greatest deed was saving humans from a great flood by taking them aboard a giant raft; however, when Raven asked the Earth's peoples for a woman to take as his wife he was refused. In revenge, Raven created mosquitoes from crushed leaves to pester humans for all time. Another myth tells how Raven's trickery wins him a bride, but his feathers were later turned black when his brother-in-law smoked him over a fire.

Raven plays a part in varying creation myths of Native American tribes.




SYMBOLISM OF RAVEN


There is a beautiful story describing how Raven brought many treasures to the Earth, and from this tale magical symbols may be taken as charms.

 Grey Eagle was the guardian of the Sun, Moon and stars, and of fresh water and fire. He

You can use the symbols of the Sun, Moon and stars to call upon Raven.

hated humans and kept these treasures hidden from the world.

 When he was a snow-white bird, Raven was invited by the beautiful daughter of Grey Eagle to visit her father's lodge. As soon as it was opportune, Raven stole all of Grey Eagle's precious treasures and flew away; he distributed them around the Earth.

 Raven hung the Sun in the sky and when it set he fastened the Moon and stars. The fresh water fell from his beak and created all the streams and lakes of the world, but as he flew, the last treasure, fire, turned his white feathers black, and he dropped it onto some rocks. It is thought that this is why striking two stones together can spark a flame.

