

LORD MAHADEV'S HERBS – GOND

The creation myth of the Gonds is performed by Gond bards called Parghania throughout Central India, the land known as Gondwana. The Gondi language has six varieties spread over six different states. These states are adjacent to each other and represent a common culture. The creation myth from Chhattisgarh starts with an expanse of water and Mahadeo seated on a floating lotus flower. As he saw nothing but water, he made a crow from the dirt of his body and sent it to find earth. The crow flew and flew till it came to rest on the claws of the great crab, Kakramal Kshattri. And then the two of them went on a long journey to find earth to Singardip where the earth was in the custody of Nal Raja and Nal Rani (earthworms).

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Up till this point, the story is very similar to the one by Nimaris as we saw earlier. The crow and the crab stole the earth from the earthworms and gave it to Mahadeo, who sowed seven kinds of herbs, each with a distinct quality. The first was the sweet herb; the second was the herb that kills hunger; the third was the herb that makes one happy; the fourth was the herb that brings one all the news; the fifth was the herb with the magic power of changing any tangible product with life; the sixth was a sorrow-giving herb and the seventh herb gave children. One fine morning when Mahadeo was away, Parvati, the wife of Mahadeo, ate the seventh herb despite being warned by her husband never to consume the seventh one. Well, this led to the birth of several children who are the generators of all Gonds and their clans.