

# CAIRNS

Please address the following in your talk:

- CAIRNS? - Logo for for 2023 Youth Theme
- What is a CAIRN? (also what they are not)
- What is the significance of CAIRNS (scriptures)
- How do CAIRNS relate to what we will discuss today?
- Incorporate the song *I Believe in Christ*
- Address any of the questions from the stake Primary presidency, if it works for you.

Stacked rocks are often used for guiding people to the correct trails.

**A cairn is a man-made pile (or stack) of stones raised for a purpose, usually as a marker or as a burial mound.**

**The word *cairn* comes from the Scottish Gaelic: *càrn* [*ˈkʰaːr̥n̪ˠ*] (plural *càirn* [*ˈkʰaːr̥n̪*]).<sup>[1]</sup>**

**Cairns have been and are used for a broad variety of purposes. In prehistoric times, they were raised as markers, as memorials and as burial monuments (some of which contained chambers).**

**In modern times, cairns are often raised as landmarks, especially to mark the summits of mountains. Cairns are also used as trail markers. They vary in size from small stone markers to entire artificial hills, and in complexity from loose conical rock piles to elaborate megalithic structures. Cairns may be painted or otherwise decorated, whether for increased visibility or for religious reasons.**

Buddhist writers describe the construction of a cairn as a form of worship, a way to ask for good fortune or an effort to balance energies. Cairns were used in astronomy or for pointing toward the setting sun for solstice celebrations. Other ceremonial uses are evident as well.

**Generally, rock cairns are a way of marking the right way on not-so-well-defined trail.**

Who had this crazy idea to use rocks to mark the path? It isn't a new idea at all. Sailors often used stone mounds before lighthouses to support navigation. Stone piles were and are still very common for route-marking in the Andes mountain range, the Tibetan plateau, and Mongolia. Many of the mounds that stand today in these mountains are ancient and historical.

Cairns, in history and today, have also been used for non-navigational reasons. They have been built as burial monuments, for defense, for ceremonial purposes, or to hide a food cache. Similar in look to rock cairns is the new modern art and hobby of “rock balancing,” where people create abstract towers with rocks.



## What Rock Cairns Are

- Rock cairns are for navigation.
- Rock cairns are for safety.
- Rock cairns are for marking trails with minimal disruption to the natural environment, helping to avoid the need for unnatural and expensive signage along trails.

## & Aren't

DECORATIVE ROCK CAIRNS CAN TAKE AWAY FROM THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF AN AREA AND DISREGARD LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES.

- Rock cairns aren't for aesthetics.
- Rock cairns aren't for competition to see who can build a taller cairn.
- Rock cairns aren't for having a seat for a picnic.
- Rock cairns aren't for hiding emergency gear.

4 areas of focus that the youth will be presenting:

1. **Direction**
2. **Honor God**
3. **Establish Boundaries**
4. **Safety**

As Cairns provide **direction** on hiking trails, the Holy Ghost provides direction in our lives. It is imperative that we seek His guidance and learn to recognize it and act upon the inspiration and promptings we receive.

As cairns were used to **honor God** in the old testament, the Priesthood helps to honor God in our day. We must strive to understand what the Priesthood is so that we may avail ourselves of the power of God and to truly honor Him..

As cairns have been used to **establish boundaries** in the scriptures, the Priesthood ordinances of salvation help us establish boundaries in our lives. The decisions we make about what we will and will not do, say, or partake of. The responsibilities and ordinances of the Priesthood set us apart from others.

As cairns have been used to provide **safety** by indicating the right way to go, we can always find safety in making and keeping covenants with God. Keeping the covenants we made at baptism and that we will make in the temple will provide safety from the evil pitfalls of the world.

## Cairns in the scriptures

Genesis 31:51

Laban said to Jacob, "Behold this heap and behold the pillar which I have set between you and me.

Genesis 31:52

This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass by this heap to you for harm, and you will not pass by this heap and this pillar to me, for harm.

Genesis 31:46-52

Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." So they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. Now Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me this day." Therefore it was named Galeed, read more.

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Genesis 31:46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

### **What does Genesis 31:46 mean?**

Laban has suggested a covenant between himself and Jacob. Jacob has taken his wives, flocks, and children to return to Canaan. Laban, Jacob's father-in-law and employer, sees all of those as his possessions, though Jacob disagrees and describes the many ways in which Laban has cheated him over the last twenty years. Ultimately, they have agreed to disagree, in particular since Laban has been warned directly by God not to interfere with Jacob (Genesis 31:24).

Jacob responds to this pact by first building a pillar that will serve as a lasting witness to the event. Now he recruits the gathered "kinsmen" to also build a "heap" or cairn. Literally, a cairn is a pile of rocks built up to clearly indicate they have been placed by human hands, often as a waypoint or marker of a grave or, as in this case, a border. Jacob calls the kinsmen to participate in this covenant ceremony. It is between Jacob and Laban, but also between their clans. The ceremony included both groups eating a meal together by the cairn or "heap" of stones

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Joshua 7:26

They raised over him a great heap of stones that stands to this day, and the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the valley of Achor to this day.

Joshua 8:29

He hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening; and at sunset Joshua gave command and they took his body down from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the city gate, and raised over it a great heap of stones that stands to this day.

2 Samuel 18:17

They took Absalom and cast him into a deep pit in the forest and erected over him a very great heap of stones. And all Israel fled, each to his tent.

Hosea 12:11

Is there iniquity in Gilead?

Surely they are worthless.

In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls,

Yes, their altars are like the stone heaps

Beside the furrows of the field.

## Opening Song: I Believe in Christ

1. I believe in Christ; he is my King!  
With all my heart to him I'll sing;  
I'll **raise my voice in praise** and joy,  
In **grand amens** my tongue employ.  
I believe in Christ; he is God's Son.  
On earth to dwell his soul did come.  
He healed the sick; the dead he raised.  
Good works were his; **his name be praised.**  
(honor God)

2. I believe in Christ; oh blessed name!  
As Mary's Son he came to reign  
'Mid mortal men, his earthly kin,  
To save them from the woes of sin.  
I believe in Christ, who **marked the path**,  
Who did gain all his Father hath,  
Who said to men: "**Come, follow me**,  
That ye, my friends, with God may be."  
(direction)

3. I believe in Christ—my Lord, my God!  
My feet **he plants on gospel sod.**  
**I'll worship him with all my might;**  
He is the **source of truth and light.**  
I believe in Christ; he ransoms me.  
From Satan's grasp he sets me free,  
And I shall live with joy and love  
In his eternal courts above.  
(establish boundaries)

4. I believe in Christ; he stands supreme!  
From him I'll **gain my fondest dream;**  
And while I strive through grief and pain,  
His voice is heard: "**Ye shall obtain.**"  
I believe in Christ; so come what may,  
**With him I'll stand in that great day**  
When on this earth he comes again  
To rule among the sons of men.  
(safety)

Consider addressing any of the following if it fits into your talk:

### FROM THE STAKE PRIMARY PRESIDENCY

*President Russell M. Nelson declared, "Anytime you do anything that helps anyone—on either side of the veil—take a step toward making covenants with God and receiving their essential baptismal and temple ordinances, you are helping to gather Israel." This is missionary work in the truest sense of the word.*

Consider these Childrens' homes and backgrounds; would these families' benefit from this teaching as well?

Do the children know they are acting as saviors to these individuals?

Do they know how important the Sacrament is in receiving forgiveness?

Do they know their responsibilities as they act as a witness during a Baptism?

Do they understand the importance of REGULAR participation in these Ordinances?

Do they understand what *President Oaks taught about YM/YW callings, that “whoever functions in an office or calling from one who holds priesthood keys exercises priesthood authority in performing his or her assigned duties”?*

Are the children joyfully excited about going to the temple or are they skeptically anxious?

**What can you do to teach these truths and allay their fears?**