

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



**A SECURE  
FUTURE—HOW  
CAN YOU FIND IT?**

What can you do to find a secure future?  
The articles in this magazine will help you  
to examine your options. They will also  
help you to find the only source that can  
guarantee you a secure future.



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THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, honors Jehovah God, the Ruler of the universe. It comforts people with the good news that God's heavenly Kingdom will soon end all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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# A Secure Future —Everyone's Desire

What kind of future do you desire? Like most people, you no doubt want a secure future for yourself and your family—one of happiness, good health, peace, and prosperity.

Many people, however, doubt that they will have the future they desire. They have seen sudden and unexpected events—such as the COVID-19 pandemic—upend society, devastate the economy, and threaten their life. As a result, they feel that their future is far from secure.

In view of the uncertainty, people are eagerly searching for something that will guide them to a better future. Some trust in such **unseen forces** as fate or fortune. Many pursue **education** and **wealth**, thinking that these things will guarantee that they get what they want. Others feel that **being a good person** is all they need to do to have a good life.

Will any of those options lead you to the future you desire? To find out, you need to consider these questions:

- What really determines your future?
- Can education and money guarantee a better life?
- Will being a good person guarantee you a secure future?
- Where can you find a reliable guide to a secure future?

This issue of *The Watchtower* can help you find the answers.



# What Really Determines Your Future?

Many people believe that some unseen force controls their future. Based on this belief, they follow practices that they feel will improve their personal prospects.



## WHAT MANY BELIEVE

**ASTROLOGY:** Some people believe that their future is fixed based on the way the stars were lined up at the moment of their birth. They consult astrological forecasts, or horoscopes, to find out what will befall them and then act to avoid harm or find success.

**FENG SHUI:** Others believe that the key to success is to bring their surroundings into harmony with unseen forces in nature. Lo Wing,\* who lives in Hong Kong, says, “A feng shui master told me that putting a special crystal in a designated place in my store would help me earn more money.”

\* In this article and the ones that follow, some names have been changed.

**ANCESTOR WORSHIP:** Still others believe that they must appease dead ancestors or various deities to gain their protection and blessing. Van, who lives in Vietnam, says, “I believed that by paying homage to my ancestors, I would enjoy a better life now and a secure future for me and my children.”

**REINCARNATION:** Many view existence as an endless cycle of life, death, and rebirth. They believe that the good or bad they experience now is the result of events in a previous life.

Many, though, consider such beliefs as superstition. Yet, they still dabble in palmistry, horoscopes, Ouija® boards, tarot cards, and the like. They feel that perhaps there is a chance that such practices can help them know their future.

## WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

Have those who trust in such beliefs and practices found a good life and a secure future?

Consider the experience of Hào, who lives in Vietnam. He turned to astrology, feng shui, and ancestor worship to guide him. Did he find success? Hào says, “I failed in my business, fell into debt, faced family conflicts, and was emotionally wrecked.”

Qiuming, from Taiwan, likewise believed in astrology, reincarnation, fate, feng shui, and ancestor worship. After examining these

subjects carefully, he said: “I realized that such teachings and customs are in conflict with each other and are confusing. I found that the astrological predictions were often incorrect. As for reincarnation, if you have no memory of your previous life, how can you change and do better in the next life?”

As Hào, Qiuming, and many others have come to realize, our future is not determined by fate, the stars, deceased ancestors, or re-birth. Does this mean that we have no control over our future?

“I realized that such teachings and customs are in conflict with each other and are confusing.” —QIUMING, TAIWAN

## YOUR CHOICE MATTERS

Although many things that happen to us are beyond our control, experience tells us that our choices do affect our future. For example, why do we wash our hands or wear a face mask when an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, is spreading? Because choosing to do so can protect our life. Clearly, your choices matter.

Of course, we need to make wise choices if we want to get good results. Some 2,000 years ago, a wise teacher illustrated the point

this way: “Whatever a person is sowing, this he will also reap.”\*

Many feel that the way to guarantee a better future is for them to pursue higher education and wealth. What have been the results for some who have made that choice?

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\* This statement is found in the Holy Bible at Galatians 6:7. The thought is expressed in such popular Oriental sayings as Plant melons, you'll get melons; plant beans, you'll get beans.

# Can Education and Money Guarantee a Secure Future?

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Many think that those who are well-educated and rich have a secure future. They believe that a university education can help a person become a better worker, a better family member, and a better citizen. They may also feel that a good education will lead to a better-paying job and that those who make a lot of money will be happy.

## A CHOICE MANY MAKE

Consider the comments made by Zhang Chen, who is from China. He says, “I believed that I needed a university degree to get out of poverty and that a high-paying job would guarantee a happy and satisfying life.”

To improve their chances of gaining a secure future, many are eager to attend famous universities, perhaps in other countries. This trend had increased noticeably until COVID-19 restricted international travel. A 2012 report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development says: “Asians account for 52% of all students studying abroad.”

Parents often make great sacrifices so that their children can attend university overseas. Qixiang, from Taiwan, recalls: “My parents were not well-off, but they sent all four of us children to college in the United States.” To pay for such education, his family, like many others, had to go deep into debt.

## WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

Education can improve life in some ways, but it does not always bring the results that students expect. For example, after years of sacrifice and incurring significant debt, many cannot find the job they wanted. A report by Rachel Mui in Singapore's *Business Times* says: "Graduate unemployment appears to be a growing issue." Jianjie, a doctorate holder who lives in Taiwan, says, "Many have no choice but to accept a job that has nothing to do with their degree."

Those who can obtain a job in their chosen profession may still find that their life has not turned out as they had hoped. After returning from university in the United Kingdom, Niran, who is from Thailand, found a job in his field. "As I expected, the degree helped me to get a job with a higher salary.

However, the higher salary demanded more work and more time from me. Eventually, the company laid off most of its employees, including me. I realized that there is no security in any job."

Even those who are rich or have achieved the so-called good life still face family problems, health tragedies, and economic uncertainty. Katsutoshi, from Japan, admits, "I enjoyed many material things, but I was frustrated by competition, jealousy, and bullying." Lam, a woman who lives in Vietnam, says, "I see many people strive for a well-paying job to obtain financial security, but in reality, it has the opposite effect—insecurity, health disorders, emotional exhaustion, and depression."

Many who pursued advanced education and wealth are left frustrated



## WHY EDUCATION AND MONEY ARE NOT ENOUGH

To be sure, people need a basic education and money to provide for themselves and their family. However, these are not enough to guarantee a secure future. Why not? Consider what the Holy Writings say.

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### HIGHER EDUCATION DOES NOT ALWAYS BRING SUCCESS.

“The swift do not always win the race, . . . nor do the intelligent always have the riches, nor do those with knowledge always have success, because time and unexpected events overtake them all.”

—ECCLESIASTES 9:11.

Those who seem most qualified to succeed often do not, and usually for reasons they cannot control. Economic instability, social injustice, and prejudice can prevent even the best educated people from doing what they want to do.

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### WEALTH MAY NOT LAST.

“Do not wear yourself out to gain wealth. Stop and show understanding. When you cast your eyes on it, it is not there, for it will surely sprout wings like an eagle and fly off into the sky.”

—PROVERBS 23:4, 5.

Any security that money provides is temporary. Upheavals in the financial world can wipe out a person's life savings overnight. Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, wildfires, and cyclones, can leave a person bankrupt and homeless.

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### MONEY OFTEN BRINGS PROBLEMS.

“The plenty belonging to the rich one does not permit him to sleep.”

—ECCLESIASTES 5:12.

Franklin, who lives in Hong Kong, experienced the truthfulness of that wise saying. He had advanced education and a well-paying job. Then he was promoted to be a manager. “The stress began to affect my health,” he said. “I worried so much that I could not sleep.” Eventually he reached a breaking point. “I started to question why I was doing this,” he recalled, “and it led me to think more about the purpose of life.”

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Like Franklin, many have concluded that there is more to life than pursuing higher education and riches. Rather than focus their life on material things, some seek a better future by striving to be a good person and to do good to others. Will pursuing such a way of life guarantee a secure future? The next article offers the answer.

“Do not wear yourself out to gain wealth.”—PROVERBS 23:4



# Will Being a Good Person Guarantee a Secure Future?

For centuries, many people have felt that being a good and moral person is the way to a secure future. For example, people in the Orient respected what the philosopher-teacher Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) said: “What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.”\*

## A COURSE MANY FOLLOW

Many still believe that proper behavior is the key to a secure future. They try to be respectful, cultivate good manners, recognize their place in society, and maintain a good conscience. “I always believed that if I was honest and sincere,” says Linh, a woman in Vietnam, “I would be blessed in return.”

Some are motivated by their religious beliefs to do good. A man named Hsu-Yun, who lives in Taiwan, says, “I was taught that a person’s deeds while he is alive will determine whether he will enjoy endless bliss or suffer torment after he dies.”

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\* For a discussion of the influence of Confucian teaching, see chapter 7, paragraphs 31-35, of the book *Mankind’s Search for God*, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses and available online at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).





## WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

It is true that when we do good to others, we enjoy many benefits. However, many who sincerely try to be good to others find that doing so does not always lead to what they might expect. “I learned firsthand that those who do good are not always blessed in return,” says a woman named Shiu Ping, who lives in Hong Kong. “I tried my best to care for my family and to do good. But my marriage failed and my husband abandoned me and my son.”

Many have seen that religion has not always made people better. “I got involved in a religious organization and became a director of youth activities,” says Etsuko, a woman who lives in Japan. “I was shocked to see the loose morals, power struggles, and dishonest use of funds by those involved in my religion.”

“I tried my best to care for my family and to do good. But my marriage failed and my husband abandoned me and my son.”

—SHIU PING, HONG KONG

Some who are devout have felt disappointed when their good deeds went unrewarded. That was how Van, a woman from Vietnam, felt. “Every day I bought fruits, flowers, and food and offered them on the altars of my dead ancestors, hoping that I would enjoy blessings in the future,” she says. “Despite all the good deeds and religious rituals that I had performed for many years, my husband was struck with a debilitating disease. Then, while my daughter was studying abroad, she passed away at a young age.”

## WHY BEING A GOOD PERSON IS NOT ENOUGH

Being a good person is important, but it is not enough to guarantee a secure future. Why not? Consider what the Holy Writings tell us.

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### NOT EVERYONE CHOOSES TO DO GOOD

“Just one sinner can destroy much good.”—**ECCLESIASTES 9:18.**

Even if you try very hard to be a good person, your future can be threatened by the selfish actions of others. For example, during a pandemic you may follow the advice of the authorities and avoid close contact with others. But what if some refuse to cooperate? Their conduct could undermine the health of those who try to do what is right.

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### PEOPLE CAN BE MISTAKEN ABOUT WHAT IS GOOD OR BAD

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”  
—**PROVERBS 14:12.**

History is full of examples of people who pursued a course that they were convinced was good, only to find out that they were wrong. Good intentions do not shield someone from the consequences of bad decisions.

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### LIFE IS UNPREDICTABLE

“You do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.”—**JAMES 4:14.**

No matter how virtuous a person may be, his life can be cut short. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, many selfless volunteers lost their lives. Or consider the experience of Liting, a woman in China who lost her father in a car accident. She says: “I couldn’t understand how such a kind person could die. My father was hardworking, down-to-earth, and sincere. He was the only one in the vehicle who was killed.”

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If being a good person offers no assurance of a secure future, what does? To answer this question, we need a reliable guide—a source of information that can answer our questions and point the way to a secure future. Where can we find such a guide?

# Is There a Reliable Guide to a Secure Future?

As discussed in the preceding articles, people have tried to find a better future by putting their trust in such things as fate, education, wealth, and being a good person. Taking these approaches, however, is like using a faulty map to get to a destination. Does that mean there is no reliable guide for the future? No!

## **GUIDANCE FROM A SUPERIOR SOURCE**

When making decisions, we usually consult someone who is older and wiser than we are. In a similar way, we can find sound guidance for our future from a Source who is far older and wiser than we are. The counsel from this One has come to us in a collection of sacred writings that began to be produced about 3,500 years ago. This collection of holy writings is a book called the Bible.

Why can you trust the Bible? Because its Author is the oldest and wisest Person in the universe. He is described as “the Ancient of Days” who is “from everlasting to everlasting.” (Daniel 7:9; Psalm 90:2) He is “the Creator of the heavens, the true God, the One who formed the earth.” (Isaiah 45:18) He identifies himself by his personal name, Jehovah.—Psalm 83:18.

Because the Bible is from the Creator of all mankind, it does not favor one culture or race over another. Its counsel is timeless and has benefited people in all lands. It is avail-



able in more languages and has been more widely distributed than any other book.\* This means that people everywhere can easily understand it and be guided by it. These facts support the Bible's own statement:

**“God is not partial, but in every nation the man who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”**

**—ACTS 10:34, 35.**

Just as a caring parent provides guidance for his children, Jehovah God is a loving Father who offers us help through his Word, the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16) You can trust his Word; after all, he made us and knows what course of life is best for us.

\* For details regarding the translation and distribution of the Bible, go to [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org) and look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > HISTORY & THE BIBLE.



## GUIDANCE THAT IS RELIABLE

We can trust that the Bible is a reliable guide for the future because some 2,000 years ago, it accurately foretold world events and people's *behavior* that we see today.

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### EVENTS

“Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another food shortages and pestilences.” —LUKE 21:10, 11.

### BEHAVIOR

“In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.”

—2 TIMOTHY 3:1-4.

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What do you conclude when you see that the Bible so long ago accurately described what is happening today? No doubt you will agree with Leung, from Hong Kong, who says: “Bible prophecies were written long ago. It is impossible for any human to have predicted these things so accurately. The Bible has to be inspired by someone far superior to us.”

The Bible contains hundreds of prophecies that have been fulfilled.\* These prove that the Bible really is God's Word. “I am God, and there is no one like me,” says Jehovah. “From the beginning I foretell the outcome.” (Isaiah 46:9, 10) With good reason, therefore, you can rely on what the Bible says about the future.

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\* For more details, see chapter 9 of the book *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses. It is available online at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). Look under LIBRARY > BOOKS & BROCHURES.

## **GUIDANCE THAT BENEFITS YOU NOW AND FOREVER**

When you follow the guidance found in the Holy Scriptures, you benefit yourself. Consider some examples.

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### **BALANCED VIEW OF MONEY AND WORK**

“Better is a handful of rest than two handfuls of hard work and chasing after the wind.”—**ECCLESIASTES 4:6.**

### **FAMILY LIFE**

“Each one of you must love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband.”—**EPHESIANS 5:33.**

### **HUMAN RELATIONS**

“Let go of anger and abandon rage; do not become upset and turn to doing evil.”—**PSALM 37:8.**

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Applying what the Bible says benefits you now and also opens up to you a bright future. In the Bible, we find God’s promise of a wonderful future that includes

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### **PEACE AND SECURITY**

“They will find exquisite delight in the abundance of peace.”—**PSALM 37:11.**

### **HOUSING AND FOOD FOR ALL**

“They will build houses and live in them, and they will plant vineyards and eat their fruitage.”—**ISAIAH 65:21.**

### **NO MORE SICKNESS OR DEATH**

“Death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.”—**REVELATION 21:4.**

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What do you need to do to be assured of such a future? Consider the next article.



# You Can Choose Your Future

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Some 3,500 years ago, Jehovah God told those who worshipped him what they must do to have a secure future: “I have put life and death before you, the blessing and the curse; and you must choose life so that you may live, you and your descendants.”—Deuteronomy 30:19.

To have a bright future, those people had to make the right choice. Today we have the same options. The Bible explains how to choose a secure future: “By loving Jehovah your God, by listening to his voice.”—Deuteronomy 30:20.

## HOW CAN WE LOVE JEHOVAH AND LISTEN TO HIS VOICE?

**LEARN FROM THE BIBLE:** To love Jehovah, you first need to learn about him from the Bible. As you do, you will discover that he is a loving God who wants the best for you. He invites you to pray to him “because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:7) The Bible promises that if you make the effort to get close to him, “he will draw close to you.”—James 4:8.

**APPLY WHAT YOU LEARN:** To listen to God means to follow his wise guidance found in the Bible. As you do, “your way will be successful and then you will act wisely.”—Joshua 1:8.

To learn more, visit our website, [jw.org](http://jw.org), where you can read the Bible online, take an online Bible study course,\* or request one-on-one help to understand the Bible.

Make the choice now to let the Bible guide you to a secure future!

\* Currently available in seven languages, including Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese.



# THE WAY TO A SECURE FUTURE

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE  
WAY TO A SECURE FUTURE?  
WOULD IT BE:

- Higher education?
- Wealth?
- Being a good person?
- Something else?

**The Holy Writings say:**

“Wisdom is good for you. If you  
find it, you will have a future.”

—PROVERBS 24:14.

In the Holy Writings, you will find  
words of wisdom that can lead you  
to a secure future.



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