

Economic Boom 2018: How Long Will It Last?

By T.W. Tramm

DOES anyone else find it odd that during a time of increasing natural disasters, record debt, escalating trade wars—and virtually every other type of bad news one can imagine—the US economy is booming? The Stock Market continues to break records, and jobless claims haven't been this low since 1969.

That the world's biggest economy is riding a wave of financial prosperity is significant because Scripture says that when the day of the Lord begins it will be during a time of abundance: people will be eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building (Luke 17:26-29).

This describes much of the world today.

But for how much longer?

Saturday, September 22 marks the autumnal equinox, one of two points in Earth's yearly circuit around the Sun at which our planet's equator passes through the center of the solar disc. From this day forward, the minutes of darkness in a 24-hour day will begin to increase over the minutes of daylight, bringing cooler temperatures and transforming deciduous landscapes.

The equinox is a harbinger of change.

The autumnal equinox is associated with change in the Bible as well. Consider the themes of the three feasts of the Lord that occur around this time:

- The memorial blowing of trumpets on Yom Teruah is a reminder, or wakeup call, that a critical moment is at hand.
- The shofar blast on Yom Kippur proclaims the Jubilee, and the liberation and homecoming of slaves and servants.
- The Feast of Tabernacles celebrates the final ingathering of the year's crops and the conclusion of the harvest season.

In the Old Testament, the summer-to-autumn change of season signals a time of judgment for Israel:

- In Micah, an empty vineyard is indicative of summer's end. A post-rapture (tribulation-period) world is typified as the only people who remain on the earth are wicked and looking to shed blood: "What misery is mine! I am like one who gathers summer fruit at the gleaning of the

vineyard; there is no cluster of grapes to eat, none of the early figs that I crave. The faithful have been swept from the land; not one upright person remains. Everyone lies in wait to shed blood; they hunt each other with nets” (Mic. 7:1-2).

- In Amos, a basket of fruit that has ripened over the summer is a symbol of Israel being ripe for judgment: “This is what the Sovereign LORD showed me: a basket of summer fruit ... Then the LORD said to me, ‘The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer’” (Amos 8:1, 2).
- In Jeremiah, the Jews lament the passing of the summer harvest as a time of deliverance: “The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved” (Jer. 8:20).

Important rapture typologies, which feature a “change of address” via a wedding or courtship, can also be linked to the equinoctial change of season:

- In the Book of Ruth, the Gentile bride lives with her mother-in-law, Naomi, until all of the wheat harvest is complete (Ruth 2:21-23). If “all” of the harvest includes the wheat planted in the spring and harvested in late summer/early autumn, i.e. spring wheat, it would have been around the time of the equinox that Ruth moved out of her mother-in-law’s house to take up residence with her new husband and kinsman redeemer, Boaz.
- In the Song of Solomon, “tender grapes” are the last agricultural sign mentioned before the shepherd comes to gather and spirit away his beloved Shulammitite maid: “The vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away” (Song 2: 13) In Israel grapes are harvested between August and October, though peak harvest time is September, the month of the equinox.

Finally, getting back to our financial theme, the turn of the season from summer to winter is historically a time of *economic* change, when major crashes or downturns occur. What’s more, financial crashes tend to occur as new highs are being reached. These facts raise some timely questions. First, will the world’s economy continue to surge for another year, or might this autumn see the “fall” that some experts warn is imminent? Second, what will be the trigger of the next collapse? Will it be something fairly predictable in the financial or geopolitical realms or, rather, some sudden and unanticipated event that shocks the world?

With the quickening pace of “birth pains” in view, one suspects it may be the latter.

“The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night ... suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief” (1 Thess. 5:2-4).

LINKS:

<https://www.foxbusiness.com/markets/stock-futures-point-to-cautious-gains-following-wednesdays-rally>

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-jobless-claims-fall-to-49-year-low-for-third-straight-week-1537446974>