

Fire and Calamity In Summer 2018

By T.W. Tramm

AMIDST a flood of news about unusual and record-breaking phenomena this summer, a terrible milepost was reached in California this week: The [Mendocino complex fire](#) became the largest wildfire in state history.

California is in the middle of yet another record-breaking fire season with 820,000 acres already burned—more than twice the area burned by this point last year. Currently, over 14,000 firefighters continue to battle more than a dozen large wildfires across the state where, like around much of the globe, abnormally high temperatures and drought conditions are generating unprecedented blazes.

It's not just wildfires happening around the world this summer; we're also seeing a major ramp-up of other phenomena that Jesus said would herald His return: wars and rumors of wars, deadly disease outbreaks, earthquakes, and storms.

A sampling of headlines from just this week:

["Iran Threatens Strait of Hormuz"](#)

["Israel Pounds Hamas After 17 Injured In Rocket Barrage"](#)

["Russia to Deploy Military Police On Golan Heights"](#)

["IDF Says War In Gaza Approaching"](#)

["China Fires Six Warnings to US Navy in South China Sea"](#)

["Confirmed Ebola Cases Rise to 13 In Congo's Latest Outbreak"](#)

["Lyme Disease Is Now In All 50 States"](#)

["Super Gonorrhea Outbreak Worsens As New Strains Emerge"](#)

["Brazil Rushes to Thwart Measles Outbreak From Venezuelans"](#)

["Global AIDS Epidemic Could Be Facing Resurgence"](#)

["Bali Rocked After 6.9 Magnitude Earthquake Strikes Indonesia's Lombok Island, Deaths Reported"](#)

[“Yellowstone Volcano latest: Big One fears as 153 Earthquakes strike Yellowstone in July”](#)

[“Particularly Strong, Long-lived Red Tide Envelops Florida Beaches, Kills marine Life, Threatens Humans”](#)

[“Melted Asphalt: Europe Wilts In Heat”](#)

[“Relentless Rain Floods Areas Across East Coast”](#)

In addition to the escalation of signs the Lord calls “birth pains,” a host of other prophetic puzzle pieces have just recently fallen into place. For instance, the economies of both Turkey and Iran—two key nations who conspire to plunder Israel for its wealth in Ezekiel 38—are said to be on the brink of collapse:

[“Europe Banks Alert: Turkey Brink of Collapse Fear As Lira Plummets, Threatening Euro Crisis”](#)

[“Iran’s Economy On Verge of Collapse After Sanctions”](#)

Another example of the prophetic stage being set is the ongoing talk of “peace and safety” (1 Thess. 5:3) as Israel tries to negotiate a truce with Hamas and the US prepares to unveil its Mideast peace “deal of the century”:

[“Hamas: Efforts to Achieve Gaza Truce in ‘Advanced Stage’”](#)

[“Trump Staffs Up Mideast Team For Peace Plan Rollout”](#)

The convergence of events, circumstances, and natural disasters this summer, occurring on the heels of Israel’s prophetic 70th birthday and a conspicuous string of “signs in the heavens,” feels like a closing round of birth pains before the *real* trouble, known as Jacob’s Trouble, begins. As terrible as the ongoing disasters are, they are but a foretaste of what is to come during the Tribulation. According to Revelation, the sun will scorch the earth with heat so intense that men will curse God (Rev 16:8). A third of the planet’s vegetation will be burned up in a global mega-blaze (Rev 8:7). The sea will be struck by a massive asteroid, bringing untold devastation to coastal areas, shipping, and marine life (Rev. 8:8, 9). There will be enormous earthquakes and tidal waves that kill thousands (Rev. 8:5; Luke 21:25). Additionally, Isaiah 13 and 24 picture the globe reeling to and fro like a drunkard, being turned upside down, and moved out of its place. Many believe this to be a biblical description of an axial pole shift, a scientifically acknowledged phenomenon in which the earth’s crust suddenly slips around its molten core, altering the latitudinal position of the land masses.

The combination of calamity, disease, and war during the time of Jacob’s Trouble will result in living human beings becoming scarcer than gold (Isa. 13:12). Conditions will be so terrible that many of the living will *wish* for death (Rev. 9:6). Are you getting the picture? You do not want to be on earth during the outpouring of God’s wrath. Fortunately, Jesus offers a means of escape via the catching up into the clouds known as the Rapture. Read Matthew 25 and make sure you’re one of the “wise virgins”—those

who have their lamp filled with oil and burning brightly when He appears. To have one's lamp filled means to be indwelt by God's Holy Spirit. To be given the Spirit, simply ask:

"Ask and it will be given to you Your Father in heaven [will] give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" (Luke 11:9-13).

The time is short, so don't put it off: "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon" (Isa. 55:6, 7).

NOTES:

In Matthew 24 Jesus says: "You will hear of wars and rumors of wars Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places" (vv. 6, 7). Note that the Greek word translated "earthquakes" in Matthew, *seismos*, refers not only to the ground shaking but to atmospheric disturbances such as storms (see Strong's G4578).