

World Market Prognosis

September 24, 2026

MARKETS NOW Wall Street ground out a flat finish on Thursday. The S&P 500 slipped 0.02% to 7,704.13 and the Nasdaq Composite added 0.01% to 26,939.37, while the Dow fell 161.61 points, or 0.31%, to 51,349.98 in a third straight decline. Asia and Europe split: the Nikkei 225 rose 0.8% to 65,513.99, the Hang Seng lost 0.3% to 24,761.13 and Germany's DAX dropped 0.9% to 25,183.19. Bonds did the damage. The 10-year Treasury yield jumped about eight basis points to 5.19%, a 52-week high, with the 30-year at 5.48%, its highest since 2004.

COMMODITIES Crude led again. Brent gained 3.4% to \$106.60 a barrel and WTI rose 2.7% to \$94.61, trimming a spike near \$97 after Reuters reported US and Iranian negotiators were weighing a phased reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. Only 10 commodity vessels transited the strait on Wednesday, below the 10-day average of 17. Precious metals eased: gold traded near \$4,255 an ounce, down roughly 0.9%, and silver slipped about 1.8% to \$63.26, while copper held \$6.68 a pound near record territory. Wednesday's grain settlements were quiet: December corn \$5.29, December wheat \$7.09, November soybeans \$13.18.

THE PROGNOSIS The base case is that rates, not earnings, set the tone into October. S&P Global's PMI showed the strongest business activity in more than five years, lifting October Fed hike odds from about 55% on Tuesday to near 70%, and the move has come through real yields rather than inflation expectations. Two risks cut opposite ways: a Hormuz agreement would pull Brent back and ease the energy impulse, while another tanker strike reverses it. Watch the 10-year above 5.2%, the Trump-Xi talks in Washington, and rate-sensitive small caps.