

James 4:13 (James M. Freeman) 98420

Manners and Customs of the Bible, 885. Traveling Merchants (4:13)

James 4:13. Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.

It is not usual among us for merchants to get rich by going from one city to another. A steady pursuit of trade in one place is deemed essential to success. In the East, however, it is different. There the merchants are itinerant. Professor Hackett says: "Many of those who display their goods in the Eastern bazars are traveling merchants. They come from other cities, and after having disposed of their stock in trade, either for money or other commodities, proceed to another city, where they set up in business again. They supply themselves in every instance with the merchandise best suited to a particular market, and thus, after repeated peregrinations, if successful in their adventures, they acquire a competence and return home to enjoy the fruits of it. The process, therefore, agrees precisely with the apostle's representation. The way to become rich was to go into this or that city and sojourn for awhile and trade, and then depart to another city" (Illustrations of Scripture, p. 63).

The men to whom the brethren of Joseph sold him were traders of this sort. See note on Genesis 37:25 (#69).