



Fatwa no. 18558:

Q: One of my neighbors, who was called (...),

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had a car accident and died. Two months before his death, he traveled with his wife to his father-in-law. He gave me two envelopes as a trust. One of them was sealed and the other was open and he told me that the open one belonged to one of his friends who lived in Al-Sharqiyyah. He told me that he had the intention to give it back to his friend after his return. As regards the open envelope, I knew that it belonged to my dead friend. After his death, I opened the sealed envelope to know its owner's name, but I did not find any names. I handed the other envelope to his family. As regards the sealed envelope, I did not hand it to them nor did I tell them about it. I seek your advice as regards the following: Should I hand this envelope to my dead friend's family even though it does not belong to him? Should I sell it then give its price as Sadaqah (voluntary charity) to the poor on his behalf? Or should I keep it till its owner comes and claims it because no body has claimed it for seven months? I fear that its owner does not know that his friend died. May Allah reward you best!

A: You have to hand the envelope to your friend's heirs and tell them about the matter. If they believe you and want to free him of responsibility, they will look for the owner of the envelope in Sharqiyyah or anywhere then hand it to him. However, if they do not find him after the elapse of an adequate period of time,

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they should give it in charity on behalf of its real owner. If the heirs do not believe you, you should hand the envelope to the judge of the city and he knows the legal procedures that should be taken in such issues. May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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