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Al-Luqatah

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First question of Fatwa no. 1230

Q 1: A traveling man found some lost money on the road but did not find the owner thereof. What should he do with it?

A: He has to announce it in public, especially in the gatherings of the people of the two towns between which the road where he found the money is located. He also has to publicize it in all other places where he thinks that the owner of the money might be living. However, in the case that one year expires without him finding the person to whom the money belongs; the person in question is regarded as the owner thereof. He may retain it until he finds the person to whom it is due. He may also give it in Sadaqah (voluntary charity) on behalf of the person to whom it belongs. If he later finds the person to whom the concerned money belongs, he has to tell him about the matter. If the owner of the money approves of the Sadaqah, he will be rewarded for it. Otherwise, the questioner should give a similar sum to the concerned person out of the former's own money and he will get the reward of the Sadaqah. Finally, the questioner may also spend the concerned money and give a similar sum to the person to whom the money is due whenever they both meet. May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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