Fatwa no. 2010

Q: Someone found a sum of money inside a small bag and some cloth in another bag bearing a woman's name. He found the first bag in Al-Zulfa and the other bag on the way to Madinah. What is your advice in this regard?

A: It is related by Al-Bukhari and Muslim: (That the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was asked about Al-Luqata (a lost item found by someone else), then he said: Take note of its container and its tying material then make a public announcement about it

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for one year and if its owner comes, give it to him; otherwise use it as you like.) Therefore, this person has to keep the items he found, know their description very well and make public announcements about each one of them for one year in any public gathering, for example after Jumu `ah (Friday) Prayer in places like Al-Zulafa, Riyadh, Madinah Al-Qasim and so on. If he makes a public announcement through radio or television, that would be better. If the owner of any of the two lost items comes to him and describes the items, he should hand them to him. If he made a public announcement about the items and after one year elapsed, the owner does not come, the items will be his. After that, if the owner of the items comes and describes them, he should return the items to them or pay them their value especially if the lost item is made of cloth. Moreover, he may give their value in charity on behalf of their owners.

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After that, if they come and give him the description of their lost items, he should tell them that he has given them in charity. If they accept this, that would be fine. Otherwise, he has to give them the value of their lost items and expect the reward from Allah (may He be Exalted) for his good deed, which would be better. May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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