Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Portal of the General Presidency
of Scholarly Research and Ifta'

Fatwa no. 8546:

Q: About 17 years ago, two people from tribe and I were in a place that was very far from our village. I told them that I was going to visit their families and asked them to give me some money. One of them gave me 50 SR and the other gave me 100 SR. Each one of them told me to give this money to his family. My need for money and the devil's temptation made me take the money and not give it to their families. I can not forget that I have taken this money; it follows me until now even in my dreams. It should be noted that I am now well-off yet I have not repaid their money. I dare not go to them to give them their money as I feel ashamed of doing so. I appreciate your advice. May Allah reward you best! What should I do? It is important to mention that the owners of the money are still alive but I dare not meet them and tell them that I did not hand over their money to their families. May Allah grant you success!

A: If the reality is as you have mentioned, you will not be free from responsibility unless you hand the money over to their families or give it back to them.

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You have to return the money to its owners. Your feeling of shame should not stop you from maintaining people's financial rights. Fearing Allah (may He be Exalted) and freeing yourself from responsibility and from sin has to be given priority over your feeling of embarrassment. You should free yourself from responsibility in this world before it is the Hereafter when you will have no Dirhams or Dinars. On Doomsday, people will take from your rewards or their sins will be added to yours in return for your consumption of their rights in this life then you will be thrown into Hell-Fire. May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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