

## The Rulings of Lost Property (Luqtah)

**Issue 895:** The lost property which a person discovers, when there is no sign by which its owner can be known (like a dollar or quarter), then, the obligatory precaution is that he give it as charity on behalf of its owner. When (the one finding it) was himself deserving of charity (Mustahiqq), it is permissible for him to take it himself and when it is a significant sum, he should seek permission of the Religious Authority.

**Issue 896:** When the property which was discovered has a sign in it, however, its (value) is less than a Dirham (a Dirham is considered as 12.6 grains of minted silver), then, if he can identify its owner, it is not permitted for the finder except with the permission of its owner. When he cannot identify its owner, it is permissible for the finder to take possession of it and gain benefit from it. When it is ruined, it is not obligatory (upon the finder) to give its replacement. Rather, even when he did not have the intention of taking it into possession and it was ruined, without negligence, its replacement is not obligatory upon him.

**Issue 897:** When one intends to substitute the verbal notification (of finding a lost property) to a posted written notification in a place where many people frequent, and, normally, people read the written announcements and those who are educated read for those who are illiterate and this notice remains there for a period of one year, it is sufficient.

**Issue 898:** When it is hopeless before the conclusion of a year to find the owner of something lost or it was hopeless from the onset to find the owner, the obligatory precaution is that (the lost property) be given to the poor as charity on behalf of its true original owner.

**Issue 899:** When notice is given regarding something lost and it was announced for a period of a year or it is preserved in a particular place for lost items and its owner has not become clear, the discoverer of that thing has a choice between four matters.

- 1) To take possession of the lost property with the intention of returning it to its owner when he comes. Then, when that thing does not exist itself (when the owner does return), he must give its substitute.
- 2) That he will save it (for the owner), like (something deposited as) a trust.

3) To give it in charity (Sadaqah) in the way of Allah on behalf of its owner.

4) To surrender it to the Religious Authority (Al-Haakim Ash-Shar'). The recommended precaution is to give it in charity on behalf of its owner or surrender it to the Religious Authority.

**Issue 900:** When a property is discovered that will spoil if it remains, like most foods and fruits, it is obligatory to preserve it up to the time in which it does not spoil. Then, its value is appraised and it can be used or it can be sold or it can be preserved for its price. When its owner does not present himself, (the finder) gives it in charity on (the owner's behalf). The recommended precaution is that the permission of the Religious Authority be sought in (the lost items affair) when its owner was impossible to be found.

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