10296 - Those who follow madhhabs and refuse to learn

the question

What should we say to those people who continuously follow Mazhab and who say that :"we are too weak to follow Daleels, only scholars can follow Daleels as they know them very well"... What should be our response to these people who are learning the DEEN but through Mazhab glasses...

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The regular Muslim who cannot access the proofs (daleels) or understand them in the way that scholars do is obliged to consult and follow the scholars. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“So ask of those who know the Scripture, if you do not know” [al-Nahl 16:43]

But in the case of those who can arrive at the correct view on a matter by examining the evidence, it is not permissible for them to follow, unless they do not have the time to research the matter. In that case, they come under the same ruling as a regular Muslim who does not have enough knowledge.

-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Kareemal-Khudayr

There is nothing wrong with learning fiqh according to one of the four madhhabs, on condition that one follows the daleel (evidence) if it becomes apparent that the madhhab says something contrary to the daleel on a given matter, because obedience to Allaah and His Messenger comes before obedience to anyone else. It is also essential to have good manners towards other schools of thought and not to develop sectarian attitudes in opposing them. He should make the truth his aim and respect the opinions and efforts (ijtihaad) of the scholars. He should make discussing

matters with them in a polite manner his method of reaching the truth, and he should advise people in a polite way if he thinks that they are mistaken.

It is wrong for a person who is able to learn to refuse to do so on the grounds that only the scholars are able to understand the daleel. We do not say to one who is unable to engage in ijtihaad that he has to strive to derive rulings from the texts when he does not have the ability to do that and does not understand the principles; otherwise chaos would reign. But we do say that if you have some knowledge and understanding, you should at least know what the proof and daleel of your imaam (whom you are following) is, so that you can see the connection with the Qur'aan and Sunnah, and you can follow with some measure of insight and not be merely a bind follower.

And Allaah is the Source of strength and the Guide to the Straight Path.