1059 - What should I say if I am asked about my madhhab?

the question

Very often I am asked by some of our brothers who come to the Kingdom as foreign workers about what my madhhab (school of thought) is – am I a Hanbali or a Shaafa'i, etc.? In fact I am completely ignorant about this matter, and it is sufficient for me to be a Muslim; if I have a problem with regard to some religious matter, I ask the scholars. What is your opinion?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is sufficient for you to be a Muslim who follows the sharee'ah. With regard to Hanbali or Shaafa'i madhhabs, you do not have to restrict yourself to that. Those (four) scholars have a high status that is well known throughout this Ummah; their words were written down and followed by their companions and followers, and became madhhabs that were recognized and known, even though they were agreed on matters of belief and Tawheed. They were also close to one another on minor issues, but it so happened that one of them might be unaware of some evidence (daleel) or its correct interpretation, so he made ijtihaad and issued fatwaas based on his ijtihaad. They did not oblige others to adhere to what they said, but most of those followers adopted sectarian attitudes and restricted themselves to the views of those imaams even if they went against the daleel. They went to great length to interpret the texts in such a manner as to make them agree with what they thought. On this basis, we advise the "rank and file" to call themselves Muslims and to refer problematic issues to respectable scholars and to consult the works of scholars who are known for their sincere devotion to Islam and the Muslims. And Allaah knows best.