34759 - What is the Zaahiri madhhab?

the question

We have heard of the Zaahiri (literalist) madhhab – what is its main idea? Do they follow the Sunnah?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Zaahiri madhhab is well known. It is the madhhab followed by Dawood ibn ‘Ali al-Zaahiri and Abu Muhammad ibn Hazm and those who follow their line of thought.

What it means is following the apparent meaning of the texts and not looking at the basis of rulings, and they do not believe in making analogies. Rather they go by the apparent meaning of commands and prohibitions and they do not pay attention to the basis and reasons behind these rulings. They are called Zaahiris (literalists) for this reason, because they go by the apparent meaning and do not pay attention to shar’i bases, wisdom and analogies which are indicated by the Qur’aan and Sunnah. But in general their way is better than the way of those who only refer to reasoning, analogy and arguments, and who do not pay much attention to the shar’i evidence of the Qur’aan and Sunnah. But they are falling short and are to be criticized for focusing only on the apparent meanings of the texts and not paying enough attention to the bases, wisdom and reasoning which the Lawgiver referred to and the objects which sharee’ah aimed to achieve, hence they made mistakes with regard to many issues which are referred to by the Qur’aan and Sunnah.

And Allaah is the Source of strength.