

Q: As you know, in Saudi Arabia, Maghrib prayers are usually offered ten minutes after the call for prayers. I have recently seen one Hadith which can be rendered into English as 'No one should sit in the mosque until he has offered two rakah.' (Agreed by all). Also, I have heard a Hadith which can be rendered into English as "Supplication between the azan and the call for the prayers is always answered."

Does that mean that we should or we can offer two Rakah prayer after the call for the Maghrib prayer but before the congregation starts and supplicate? (Ibid)

A: The Holy Prophet saw. has emphasized in a number of ahadith that the Maghrib prayer should be offered as soon after the sunset as possible. On this basis the Hanafi jurists are of the view that the Maghrib prayer should be offered immediately after adhan without any intervening prayer as nafl. However, other jurists are of the opinion that it is advisable to offer two rak'at as nafl before the Maghrib prayer. The present practice in Makkah and Madinah is based on this latter view. Now, when the gap of about ten minutes is, in any case, available for every person who prays in the haram, one can avail of this opportunity by praying two rak'ats before the jama'ah, and there is no bar against it in Shari'ah, even in the Hanafi school, because they prefer to avoid any nafl before the Maghrib prayer only to refrain from delaying the obligatory prayer. But when the obligatory prayer is bound to be delayed, according to the current practice in haram, pointless, to avoid the nafl prayer. So one can offer nafl before Maghrib while praying in haram.

Contemporary fatawaa