‘Ā'ishah's story with Ibn Az-Zubayr that involved a separation and a vow

‘Awf ibn Mālik – or ibn al-Hārith – ibn at-Tufayl reported: ‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) was told that ‘Abdullāh ibn Az-Zubayr, upon hearing that she was selling or giving something as a gift, said: "By Allah, if ‘Ā’ishah does not give this up, I will declare her incompetent to dispose of her wealth." She asked: "Did he say so?" They replied: ‘Yes.’ So she said: "I vow to Allah that I will never speak to Ibn Az-Zubayr." When this separation had lasted for a long time, Ibn Az-Zubayr sought to intercede with her, but she said: "By Allah, I will not accept the intercession of anyone for him and will not commit a sin by breaking my vow." As this state of affairs continued for long, Ibn Az-Zubayr was concerned and he approached Al-Miswar ibn Makhramah and ‘Abdur-Rahmān ibn al-Aswad ibn ‘Abd Yaghūth and said to them: "I beseech you by Allah to help me to visit ‘Ā’ishah; it is unlawful for her to vow to sever ties with me." Al-Miswar and ‘Abdur-Rahmān took him to ‘Ā’ishah and asked for permission to enter her house, saying: "Peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you! May we come in?" She said: "Come in." They said: "All of us?" She said: "Yes, come in all of you," unaware that Ibn Az-Zubayr was with them. As they came in, Ibn Az-Zubayr entered the screened place and took hold of ‘Ā’ishah and was weeping and imploring her to forgive him. Al-Miswar and ‘Abdur-Rahmān also were begging her to speak to him and accept his apology. They said: "As you know, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) forbade a Muslim from forsaking his fellow Muslim, and it is unlawful for a Muslim to do so for more than three days." As they continued to remind and press her, she began to weep and say: "I made a vow, and a vow is something grave." They persisted in their appeal until she talked to Ibn Az-Zubayr, and she freed forty slaves in expiation for her vow. Later, whenever she remembered this vow, she would weep profusely, wetting her veil.

[Authentic hadith] [Narrated by Bukhari]

‘Abdullāh ibn Az-Zubayr (may Allah be pleased with him) heard that ‘Ā'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) made many large donations. Viewing this as an extravagance, he remarked: "By Allah, if ‘Ā’ishah does not give up this, I will declare her incompetent to dispose of her wealth." This was truly hurtful to ‘Ā'ishah, one of the Mothers of the Believers, as she was his maternal aunt and also because she possessed vast knowledge, sound reason, forbearance, and wisdom that should deter people from speaking about her in this way. When she heard ‘Abdullāh’s statement through the gossips, who always seek to damage people’s ties and stir up discord amongst them, she vowed to never speak to him again as she was so upset. She boycotted him, which was something too hard for him to bear. So he tried to appease her, but she was determined, because she was concerned about the seriousness of her vow. Ibn Az-Zubayr sought the help of two of the Prophet’s Companions, who played a good ruse that led to a good outcome; repairing the relationship

between people. They went to ‘Ā’ishah, greeted her, and asked her permission to enter her house. They asked: “May we enter?” She said: ‘Yes.’ They said: “All of us?” She said: ‘Yes’, not knowing that ‘Abdullāh was with them. They all entered as she hid behind the veil that was particularly observed by the Mothers of Believers to prevent people from seeing them - ordinary women are just required to conceal their faces and bodies, but that veil acted like a barrier between the Prophet’s wives and their unrelated men. When they entered, Ibn Az-Zubayr, her nephew, bypassed the veil and rushed towards her, weeping and imploring her to forgive him. He warned her that the severance of kinship ties was forbidden, but she took her vow very seriously and was afraid to break it. The two men persuaded her to change her mind, reminding her of the Prophet's Hadīth stating that it is unlawful for a Muslim to desert his fellow Muslim for over three days. Finally convinced, she wept and spoke to him. ‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) was so affected by this situation that she would cry every time she remembered it. To expiate for her broken vow, she emancipated forty slaves, hoping that Allah, the Almighty, would save her from Hellfire. Indeed, this reflected her caution and extreme piety, as the due expiation is the emancipation of just one slave.

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