

Membership of the Universal House of Justice and Women's Rights

Anytime a Manifestation of God has appeared on Earth, He mirrored the splendour of God. Spiritual spring emerged; gave new life, and raised humanity.

The rights of women and the slow evolution and progress of their situation in society is one of the most important principles. For thousands of years, the status of women was very low; sometimes they even had the social ranking of a slave. Even today in many parts of the Earth, women are still being mistreated. Teachings of the religions of the past required women to be dominated by men and they had to be obedient and submissive to their husbands.

The Holy Bible teaches:

"Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

(Genesis 3:16-19)

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing." (1 Timothy 2:11-15)

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." (Ephesians 5:22-24)

Since the Revelations of God are progressive, The Qur'an elevated women's rights up to half that of men.

"And get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her."

(The Qur'an, Surah 2)

“Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three monthly periods, nor is it lawful for them, to hide what Allah hath created in their wombs, if they have faith in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them and Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise.”

(The Qur'an, Surah 2)

The Dawn of the Supreme Manifestation of God and the Dayspring of His Most Divine Essence, Baha'u'llah, inaugurated a glorious new spiritual spring in the World unparalleled in the previous Dispensations.

"This is the King of Days," He thus extols the age that has witnessed the advent of His Revelation, "the Day that hath seen the coming of the Best-beloved, Him Who through all eternity hath been acclaimed the Desire of the World." "The world of being shineth in this Day with the resplendency of this Divine Revelation. All created things extol its saving grace and sing its praises. The universe is wrapped in an ecstasy of joy and gladness. The Scriptures of past Dispensations celebrate the great jubilee that must needs greet this most great Day of God. Well is it with him that hath lived to see this Day and hath recognized its station."

(The World Order of Baha'u'llah, p. 106)

“This is a century of life and renewal. Sciences and arts, industry and invention have been reformed. Law and ethics have been reconstituted, reorganized. The world of thought has been regenerated”

(Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith, p. 224)

Baha'u'llah in His Revelation granted comprehensive rights to women equal to men.

“And among the teachings of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh is the equality of women and men. The world of humanity has two wings -- one is woman and the other man. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible. Not until the world of woman becomes

equal to the world of man in the acquisition of virtues and perfections, can success and prosperity be attained as they ought to be.”

(Abdu'l-Baha, Foundations of World Unity, p. 29)

Clergies in the former times did not like that the ordinary people, especially women, were taught how to read or write; so women remained very ignorant.

In the revelation of Baha’u’llah this has been changed:

“Education holds an important place in the new order of things. The education of each child is compulsory. If there is not money enough in a family to educate both the girl and the boy the money must be dedicated to the girl's education, for she is the potential mother. If there are no parents the community must educate the child.”

(Abdu'l-Baha, Divine Philosophy, p. 83)

“The first duty of the beloved of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful is this: They must strive by all possible means to educate both sexes, male and female; girls like boys; there is no difference whatsoever between them. The ignorance of both is blameworthy, and negligence in both cases is reprobable. "Are they who know and they who do not know equal?"

The command is decisive concerning both. If it be considered through the eye of reality, the training and culture of daughters is more necessary than that of sons, for these girls will come to the station of motherhood and will mold the lives of the children. The first trainer of the child is the mother.”

(Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 111)

After the ascension of the first Guardian of the Cause of God, Shoghi Effendi, as a result of the violation of the Covenant by the former Hands of the Cause, the spiritual advancement of the peoples of the World came to a halt, and the people become more materialistic. Only a small group of true Baha’is who remained faithful, who believed in the immortality and Indestructibility of the Will and Testament of Abdu’l Baha, “the Charter of the New World Order;” and who understood the pertinent writings of Shoghi Effendi, and especially his Proclamation of 9 January 1951; and who believed that Shoghi Effendi had not failed to appoint a successor when, in his extensive writings, historic messages

and recorded talks to pilgrims they had all abundantly testified to the fact, that to the very last days of his life, he had repeatedly and consistently emphasized the continuity and the absolute essentiality of the Guardianship to the World Order of Baha'u'llah for as long as the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah endures.

In recent years, some have raised criticism regarding the equality of men and women in the Baha'i Faith and about the membership of the Universal House of Justice which is restricted to men. The critics mostly are from Muslim dominated places where women are considered as second grade citizens; who claim that in the Baha'i Faith women rights are not equal to men since they cannot be elected as members of the Universal House of Justice.

Abdu'l Baha revealed:

“Know thou, O handmaid, that in the sight of Baha, women are accounted the same as men, and God hath created all humankind in His own image, and after His own likeness. That is, men and women alike are the revealers of His names and attributes, and from the spiritual viewpoint there is no difference between them. Whosoever draweth nearer to God, that one is the most favoured, whether man or woman. How many a handmaid, ardent and devoted, hath, within the sheltering shade of Baha, proved superior to the men, and surpassed the famous of the earth.

The House of Justice, however, according to the explicit text of the Law of God, is confined to men; this for a wisdom of the Lord God's, which will ere long be made manifest as clearly as the sun at high noon.”

(Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 79)

Although establishment of a true and real Universal House of Justice is not possible at this time, but the seed (International Baha'i Council) is planted.

“Consider not the present condition, but rather foresee the future and the end. A seed in the beginning is very small, but in the end a great tree. One should not consider the seed, but the tree and its abundance of blossoms, leaves and fruits.”

(Baha'i World Faith - Abdu'l-Baha Section, p.120)

I feel the time is come, by virtue of my responsibilities as the Guardian of the Cause of God, to clarify the issue of the membership of the Universal House of Justice and women rights.

True Baha'is know that the existence of the Universal House of Justice has not developed further than the embryonic form.

As time goes on more people will become aware of the mischief and rebellious action of the former Hands of the Cause against the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha in creation of a fake and bogus body, called UHJ with no conformity with the Universal House of Justice as well-defined by Abdu'l Baha in His sacred Will and Testament [“the Charter of the New World Order which is at once the glory and the promise of this most great Dispensation”](#).

Baha'u'llah reveals:

[“The Lord hath ordained that in every city a House of Justice be established wherein shall gather counsellors to the number of Baha, and should it exceed this number it does not matter.”](#)

And the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Baha ordains:

[“...in all countries a secondary House of Justice must be instituted, and these secondary Houses of Justice must elect the members of the Universal one.”](#)

Unfortunately due to the disruption occurred to the advancement and growth of the Faith, and the spread of confusion by the headless body which undeservedly calls itself the Universal House of Justice, today not even a single House of Justice exists (not locally nor nationally) although they were established in embryonic form, by Abdu'l Baha and the first Guardian.

It must be remembered that wherever there is mention of the International or Universal House of Justice in the authoritative writings of the Faith, it means the real and true Universal House of Justice as the Master specified and clearly explained in His Will and Testament:

[“And now, concerning the House of Justice ... By this body all the difficult problems are to be resolved and the Guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred](#)

head and the distinguished member for life of that body. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him. Should any of the members commit a sin, injurious to the common weal, the Guardian of the Cause of God hath at his own discretion the right to expel him,” - (The Will and Testament, p. 14)

Also Abdu'l Baha revealed:

“But now is not the time -- it is utterly impossible to establish the House of Justice which is mentioned in the Book of Aqdas, nay rather it is impracticable and not to be thought of, **that is for the time when the Cause is proclaimed and the Commands have become effective.** Therefore now is not the time for the House of Justice, which must be established by general election. Its mention is not permissible and its realization impossible.”

(Baha'i World Faith - Abdu'l-Baha Section, p.120)

Equality of men and women concerns rights and privileges, not physical abilities and duties. Almighty God has created human beings, male and female; divided the duties related to survival and procreation and assigned each with different abilities and functions to complete each other. Men were created masculine, with stronger body to be able to go hunting and bring food to the family, carry things, do the heavy liftings, face danger and fight with aggressors in the old times. Women were created feminine, with delicate body, sensitive and naturally maternity and motherhood are the closest issues to their hearts. They bear the baby inside their body for nine months, suffer the pain of delivery and have to nurse the baby and care for the child.

While as the result of inventions and advancement of science and technology in the developed societies, muscle power is not needed as much as before, women however still must bear the burden of birth and maternity.

Rights are entitlements to perform or not to perform certain actions, to possess certain states or not to be in certain states; or prerogatives that others perform or not perform certain actions.

While voting for the election of the Houses of Justice at all three levels is the legitimate right of every mature Baha'i men and women, **membership of the**

Houses of Justice at all three levels is not a right either for men or for women.

In the Baha'i Faith no one is allowed to nominate her/himself and stand for the election of the Houses of Justice whether local, national or international.

True Baha'is do not consider membership of the Houses of Justice as an advantage and benefit to themselves. They do not pursue reputation, fame and popularity through membership of the House of Justice or other institutions or functions related to the Faith; rather they achieve it through different branches of science, arts and crafts. If they are elected to the membership of the House of Justice, they will consider it as a loving service to the Faith and society in a humble manner.

Membership of the true and real Universal House of Justice is not an easy task. Members may need to be away from home for a long period of time; they have to work long hours and bear the hardship of service.

While women must serve as a member of the local and national Houses of Justice if they are elected; but according to the Law of God they are relieved from the harsh duty of serving as the members of the Universal House of Justice.

It must be emphasized that the relief and exemption of women from membership on the Universal House of Justice in no way reduces the highly esteemed and honourable position of women in the true Baha'i Faith, and in no manner should it be imagined that women are considered as being inadequate or unequal to men.

Numerous women have been appointed by the Guardians of the Cause of God, Shoghi Effendi and Joel B Marangella, as Hands of the Cause of God. And at this time several women are serving the true Faith of God as Hands of the Cause of God.

Hands of the Cause of God outrank the members of the Universal House of Justice.

To achieve the equality of men and women around the world, both men and women need to be educated and this will only be possible by the spread of the True Baha'i Faith.

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