

A high-angle photograph of a diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, gathered in a circle. They are all looking down at their hands, which are stacked together in the center of the circle. The group includes a man with reddish hair in a light blue shirt, a woman with glasses and a beige scarf in a white shirt, a woman with glasses in a brown top, a woman with dark hair in a black vest over a beige shirt, a woman with long red hair in a green hoodie, and a man with glasses in a yellow shirt. The background is a simple, light-colored indoor setting.

# EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN

*A short prayer to begin with*

O Thou who hast bowed thyself down in prayer before the Kingdom of God! Blessed art thou, for the beauty of the divine Countenance hath enraptured thy heart, and the light of inner wisdom hath filled it full, and within it shineth the brightness of the Kingdom. Know thou that God is with thee under all conditions, and that He guardeth thee from the changes and chances of this world and hath made thee a handmaid in His mighty vineyard....

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá

**I**n this day man must investigate reality impartially and without prejudice in order to reach the true knowledge and conclusions. What, then, constitutes the inequality between man and woman? Both are human. In powers and function each is the complement of the other. At most it is this: that woman has been denied the opportunities which man has so long enjoyed, especially the privilege of education....

The truth is that all mankind are the creatures and servants of one God, and in His estimate all are human. Man is a generic term applying to all humanity. The biblical statement “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” does not mean that woman was not created. The image and likeness of God apply to her as well.—*‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

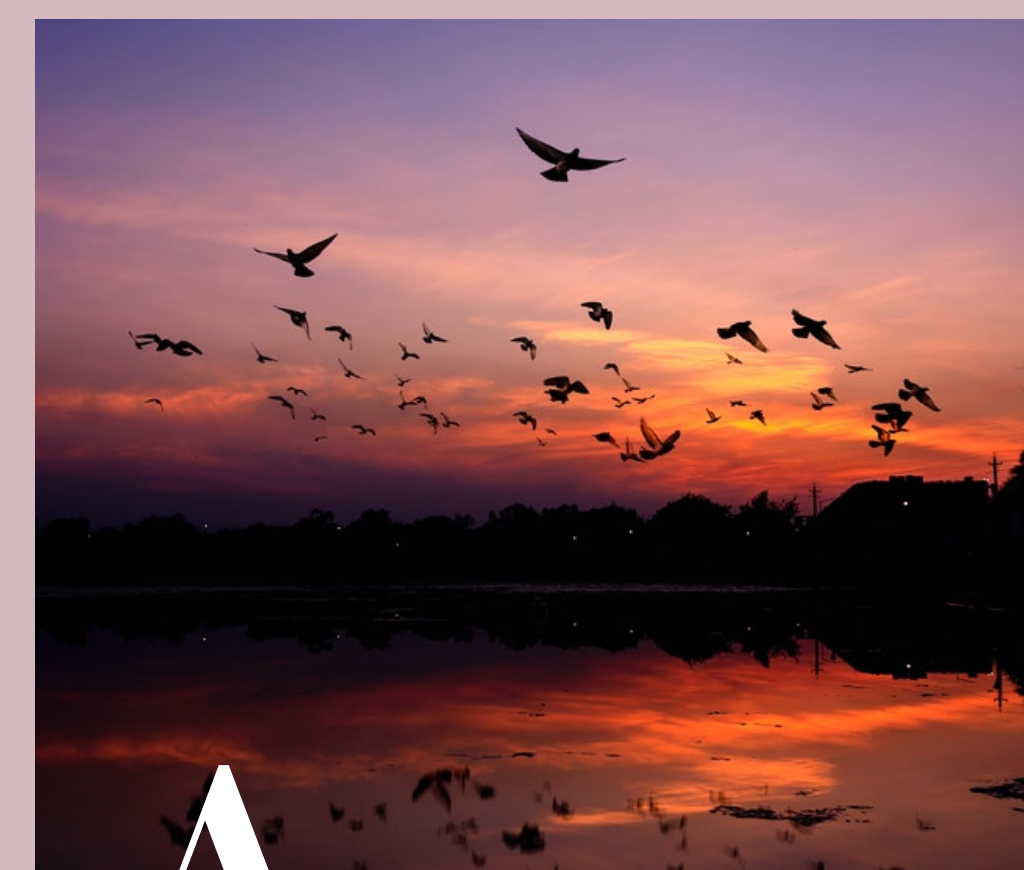
**T**here is neither Jew  
nor Greek, there is  
neither bond nor free,  
there is neither male nor  
female: for ye are all one  
in Christ Jesus.

—*Galatians 3:28*

**F**or as woman was  
made from man, so  
man is now born of  
woman. And all things  
are from God.

—*1 Corinthians 11:12*

**F**or the world of humanity possesses two wings: man and woman. If one wing remains incapable and defective, it will restrict the power of the other, and full flight will be impossible. Therefore, the completeness and perfection of the human world are dependent upon the equal development of these two wings.— *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*



**U**ntil the reality of equality between man and woman is fully established and attained, the highest social development of mankind is not possible.— *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

**A**nd let it be known once more that until woman and man recognize and realize equality, social and political progress here or anywhere will not be possible... Until these two members are equal in strength, the oneness of humanity cannot be established, and the happiness and felicity of mankind will not be a reality.— *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

**T**he emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged prerequisites of peace. The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified. Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge.—*The Universal House of Justice*

**G**ender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.—*Kofi Annan*

**W**hen all mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war will be utterly destroyed. Without equality this will be impossible because all differences and distinction are conducive to discord and strife.

— *'Abdu'l-Bahá*

**E**quality between men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to sanction it. Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifices upon the battlefield after twenty years of anxiety and loving devotion in rearing them from infancy, no matter what cause they are called upon to defend. There is no doubt that when women obtain equality of rights, war will entirely cease among mankind. — *'Abdu'l-Bahá*



**T**he world in the past has been ruled by force, and man has dominated over women by reason of his more forceful and aggressive qualities both of body and mind. But the balance is already shifting —force is losing its weight and mental alertness, intuition, and the spiritual qualities of love and service, in which woman is strong, are gaining ascendancy. Hence the new age will be an age, less masculine, and more permeated with the feminine ideals — or, to speak more exactly, will be an age in which the masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more evenly balanced.

— *‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as quoted by J.E. Esslemont*





**F**or twenty five years, the span of a generation, the data have been available to document the correlation between a variety of crucial development indicators and the education of girls... it has been amply demonstrated that it is the mother's education that makes the difference and that the positive effects increase with every additional year a girl stays in school. When all the benefits are taken into account, educating girls yields a higher rate of return than any other investment that can be made in the developing world.—*Bahá'í International Community*

...there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women.

—*Kofi Annan*

**F**urthermore, the education of women is of greater importance than the education of men, for they are the mothers of the race. — *'Abdu'l-Bahá*

**W**hen women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life. — *Kofi Annan*



**W**omen will only have true equality when men share with them the responsibility of bringing up the next generation. — *Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

**M**en must use their influence, particularly in the civil, political and religious institutions they control, to promote the systematic inclusion of women, not out of condescension or presumed self-sacrifice but out of the belief that the contributions of women are required for society to progress. Women, for their part, must become educated and step forward into all arenas of human activity, contributing their particular qualities, skills and experience to the social, economic and political equation. Women and men together will ensure the establishment of world peace and sustainable development of the planet. —*Bahá'í International Community*

**T**he happiness of mankind will be realized when women and men coordinate and advance equally, for each is the complement and helpmeet of the other. —*Abdu'l-Bahá*

**A**s long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs. —*Abdu'l-Bahá*



**K**now ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest.—*Bahá'u'lláh*