Question: In Genesis 3:20 and Genesis 4:1, Adam’s wife is called Hawa. However, I have often heard that Adam’s wife is also called Eve. Are the names Eve and Hawa the same?

Answer: Yes, Eve and Hawa refer to the same person, but the names come from two different languages—just as “Jesus” and “Yesu” are the same name rendered in English and Swahili, respectively.

Likewise, “Eve” is the English form of the name, while “Hawa” is its Swahili equivalent.

So why do the translations appear different, from Eve to Hawa, and not just translated as “Eva” in Swahili? Why is it not a direct phonetic translation but instead a different name?

The reason lies in how Swahili adapts certain letters in names and words. Often, the letter “V” in English names is rendered as “W” in Swahili. For example, the name “Levi” becomes “Lawi,” and “Nineveh,” the ancient city, is “Ninawi” in Swahili.

Therefore, even “Eva” must be adapted to “Hawa” in Swahili, following this pattern of letter substitution.

This is similar to how names starting with “J” in English often start with “Y” in Swahili:
Jesus → Yesu
Jonah → Yona
Joshua → Yoshua
Jezebel → Yezebeli

In the same way, names containing the letter “V” transform into “W” when translated into Swahili.

In conclusion, whether you say Hawa or Eve, both names correctly refer to the same person—Adam’s wife, the mother of all living (Genesis 3:20, ESV).

Theological reflection:
Eve (Hawa) holds a foundational place in the biblical narrative as the first woman, created by God as a suitable helper for Adam (Genesis 2:18, ESV). Her name, meaning “life” or “living,” reflects

her role as the mother of all humanity (Genesis 3:20). The subtle differences in her name’s pronunciation and spelling across languages remind us of the richness and diversity of God’s Word as it reaches all nations and tongues.

Moreover, Eve’s story is not just about origins but also about grace and redemption. Though she and Adam fell into sin, God’s promise of redemption (Genesis 3:15) sets the stage for Christ’s victory over sin and death, connecting the very beginning of humanity’s story to its ultimate restoration through Jesus Christ.

Have you accepted Jesus? Have you been baptized? Have you received the Holy Spirit? If not, why wait? These are the last days, and Christ stands at the door ready to return.

Maranatha! (The Lord is coming!)

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