

# interview

## Losing my son in Kaduna flood heartbreaking — Mother

*Hairdresser Blessing Samson, a woman based in Kaduna, speaks to TEMITOPE ADETUNJI about the tragic story of her son, Destiny Samson, who died after he was swept away in a flood*

**C**OULD you kindly recount what transpired on the day you tragically lost your first son?

I am Blessing Samson from Oyo State, Ibadan. I am based in Kaduna. I am married to a man from Kaduna State and I am 34 years old. The incident occurred on Saturday, August 19, 2024, precisely, during heavy rainfall in the Gonin Gora Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

**What do you do for a living?**

I own a salon; I am a hairdresser. On that evening, there was heavy rain, and I was busy in my shop. I had expected someone to drop my son home, as a senior colleague often did on rainy days using a bike. I waited that day but did not see him. Around 7 pm that night, I became worried. I instructed my eldest daughter and my other son (now 5 years old) to go inside the shop while I stepped out to look for him.

**What is his name?**

His name is Destiny.

**What happened after that?**

When I went outside to search, it was dark and everywhere looked deserted. Sensing the need, I went inside to fetch my phone and proceeded to his workplace. Upon arrival, I inquired among the crowd and was informed that a boy had been swept away by the river. Initially, I did not think it could be my son. Returning home, I told my daughter that we needed to search for her brother. People who knew him reported that he had finished work around 5 pm that day. By 11 pm, after an extensive search, we were unable to locate him. Distressed, I returned home, anticipating continuing the search the following day and possibly involving the police. I was too worried to sleep that night.

During that same night, his shoe was found, and although

my instincts suggested it could be his, people reassured me not to worry, promising to resume the search in the morning.

The next morning, just before 7 am, some men went to the riverbank and discovered his lifeless body. My husband resides in Abuja, where he works as a baker, having left Kaduna three years ago. He often spends months in Abuja due to his work commitments.

**What happened after his body was found?**

When they saw his body, they first called my husband to inform him before I finally found out. My husband told them not to bury him until he arrived.

**So who broke the news to you?**

One of the people who went to search for him, because he is like a friend to me, was the one who called me and broke the news.

**When did your husband arrive?**

He arrived that same day, the 20th of August, when my son was buried. I think he was buried around 10 am. My husband arrived around 1 pm on Sunday, August 20, 2024, due to traffic. Some people even told him to send me away, saying it was my carelessness that led to my child's death.

**Your son was buried before his arrival?**

Yes, he had to be buried, and he was buried at the riverbank.

**What vocation was your son learning?**



Mechanic.

**Was he in school?**

Yes, he normally attended vocational training every weekend. He was in JSS 2.

**How did you feel when you found out it was your son's body that was found?**

I can't even explain the feeling. I was devastated, broken, and in pain. No mother or parent wants to bury their child.

On that Saturday when the incident happened, my mind wasn't letting him go. He even came to my shop to lie down a bit before he left. It was a shocking and devastating experience for me. He was healthy and wasn't sick; he just passed away like that. I never imagined he could be swept away by a flood in the same month he was born. He was born on August 27.

**How old was he?**

He was 13 years old.

**What position was he in the family?**

He was the firstborn and first son.

**What are the memorable things that you remember him for?**

The truth is, he was a very good and respectful child who was loved by many. Some people used to tell me that I had trained him well. In their words, "Your son is so respectful."

**Did you feel depressed whenever you thought about him?**

Yes, I was almost falling into depression. I cried every day whenever I thought about the incident, but God is a miracle worker. During that August, I didn't even know I was already pregnant.

**When did you discover that you were pregnant?**

At the end of August, I found out I was pregnant after using a pregnancy test strip. I had been on family planning, and it had expired before my son's passing. We hadn't planned to have another child as we already had three.

My husband had come around in early August to take some materials from Kaduna to Abuja. When my first son passed away, I was already two weeks pregnant by the end of that August. I was blessed with another son on May 19, 2024 (last month).

**What are you grateful to God for?**

This is truly a miracle. God wiped away my tears and put a smile on my face again. God gave me a new son as a blessing. Even though I can't forget my late son, I am still thankful to God for showing me mercy. No matter what you are going through in life, just have faith that God will never leave you.

I am also grateful for the strength God has given me during my hardest times. His grace has helped me face each new day with hope. The love and support from my family and friends show me God's endless love and care.

In moments of doubt and sadness, I have felt God's presence. He has guided me and reminded me that I am never alone. He has given me comfort, turning my sorrow into joy.

So, no matter what challenges you face, hold on to your faith. Trust that God's plans for you are full of hope. He is always with you, working behind the scenes to bring good into your life. Remember, His love never fails, and His promises are true.