



## Who's Up Your Family Tree? Leaders' notes



### **Patsy Kensit**

Actress Patsy Kensit has been part of a BBC series that traces people's family history. Her father had a criminal record and was mixed up with the most notorious London criminals of the 1960's. Her grandfather also had a criminal record. She felt that she didn't have much to be proud of as far as her family were concerned.

However research further back into her family history revealed .....

...another direct ancestor – Reverend James Mayne, for 40 years curate of St Matthew's Church in Bethnal Green. "It's really weird to think that my Dad, who grew up on the wrong side of the tracks in Bethnal Green, has this ancestor – nearly 200 years ago – who was a clergyman in the same area," she says.

Records at Lambeth Palace Library show that James Mayne dedicated his life to helping the poor and was granted a prestigious honorary degree by the Archbishop of Canterbury. "I'm bursting with pride," says a delighted Patsy. "At the beginning I knew nothing, it stopped with my dad. Now I know about five generations of the Kensit line; and it's respectable! It's wonderful to carry this with me."

Discovering the respectable side of her family history was a tremendous encouragement to Patsy.

<http://www.whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/episode/patsy-kensit>

### **Interactive section**

In either groups or 'stations', take a closer look at people like Solomon, Josiah, Hezekiah, Moab, Ruth. Each group or 'station' to take one character with a leader who has read up on him/her.

The difference is that with 'stations', the young people can wander round at their own pace and choose a story that particularly appeals to them. The leader can chat about their Bible character individually with the teenagers. This may appeal to some unchurched people who are wary of anything too much like 'Bible study'. They can take a quick look at several people.

With groups, everyone will discuss the same character at the same time. This can be very stimulating and help quieter members of the group. Issues can be covered in more depth.

Either display information about the characters (for the stations) or read & chat about them (with the groups). Have a large sheet of paper where the young people can write down thoughts relating to how these people may have been affected by their family background.

### **Josiah**

Josiah became King of Judah at the age of 8 because his father King Amon was murdered! We are not told much about Amon except that he was little better than his father before him – King Manasseh. So let's start by looking at Manasseh. They really don't come much worse than him. (Leaders might like to draw a simple comparison with a recent dictator.)

## Manasseh's profile

2 Chronicles 33 – verses 1-9 for the evil part of the reign; 10-13 for his conversion & 15-20 for the good part of the reign.

- King of Judah aged 12, reigned 55 years
- Worshipped idols & built altars to pagan gods within God's Temple
- Sacrificed his sons to pagan gods (compare 2 Kings 3:26-27)
- Heavily involved in the occult, making contact with evil spirits
- Led the people astray, encouraging them to do evil
- God spoke to him but he didn't listen
- Assyrian army captured him & put him in chains with a hook in his nose
- He prayed to God, said sorry & asked for help
- God restored him as King of Judah
- He commanded everyone to worship only God

So things were just starting to improve when Manasseh died and his son King **Amon** put them right back to where they had been during the first part of Manasseh's reign. Of course he had been through some pretty bad stuff when he was young but instead of letting God heal him he hardened himself and maybe somehow got hooked on it. Well if he didn't hate that kind of life his army officers certainly weren't prepared to go back to it so they decided that assassinating him was the best option. Then other people killed those officers so there was a quite a blood bath and young Josiah was caught up in the middle of it. 2 Chronicles 33:21-25

## Discussion suggestions:

- So after such a difficult & eventful start to life, what kind of person did Josiah turn out to be?
- How might Josiah have felt about his father & grandfather?
- How might they have influenced him?
- What choices did he have to make?
- Why do you think he was able to recover from his past?
- Is there anything here that helps you or a friend?

## Josiah's profile

Full story - 2 Chronicles 34-35 & 2 Kings 22-23.

- King of Judah aged 8, reigned 31 years
- He followed God & did right. 2 Chronicles 34:2
- Age 16 he began to follow God more seriously & had the pagan altars destroyed. Verses 3-4
- He got rid of the living quarters of the male prostitutes from within the Temple. 2 Kings 23:7
- He destroyed the site used for child sacrifices. 2 Kings 23:10
- He arranged for the Temple to be repaired. 2 Chronicles 34:8
- They found the books of Moses that had been lost & Josiah realised how badly they had gone wrong as a nation. 2 Chronicles 34 verses 14-15 and 19-21
- He renewed the nation's commitment to God & led a religious revival with a huge Passover celebration. 2 Chronicles 34:29-33 and 35 verses 1 and 18

So in fact Josiah was much more like his Great Grandfather, Hezekiah who also had an evil father but who himself led a religious revival. See 2 Chronicles 28-29