



**70 Days
for 70 Years**

Remember the past to build the future

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'Jews Got Money' – Challenging Anti-Semitism and a Jewish Taboo

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The other day someone tweeted at me the words 'Jew\$ Got Mon€¥'. And I was just about to tweet back: 'Get stuffed, you anti-Semitic scum'. But I clicked on the link and realised I'd got the wrong end of the stick.

The tweet came from Sasha Andreas, who's made a documentary about poor Jews, mostly in New York. It features leaders of Jewish charities talking about a subject so sensitive that their own community is nervous about it – understandably. The words 'Jews' and 'money' are usually joined together by anti-Semites. Also, New York Jews are the wealthiest Jewish diaspora in history. 'Poor Jews' is assumed to be an oxymoron.

It isn't. **The Hebrew Free Burial Association** has the heartbreaking job of organising religious funerals and burials for Jews who 'meet their ends in a hospital, nursing home, lonely apartment or even on the street'. The Jewish community has the reputation of looking after its frailer members. It does so very successfully – but some people are forgotten. Elderly Jews marooned in formerly Jewish neighbourhoods from which everyone else has moved out. Russian immigrants, some without documentation. Victims of financial disaster.

One poor man was relying for his retirement on his son's business running the observatories on the top of the World Trade Centre. One of the Jewish community leaders in the film says, rather wistfully, that although he's proud that Jewish people are such generous benefactors of the arts and academia, he wishes they paid more attention to the 'invisible' poor. Another detail from the film: there are poor Jews in Israel, too, but the authorities can be reluctant to admit the fact out of national pride.