



## URSHAN, ANDREŌS BAR DĀWĪD

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**URSHAN, ANDREŌS BAR DĀWĪD** (Andrew David), [Assyrian](#) evangelist and author (1884-1967; [Figure 1](#)), born in the village of Ābājālui, near Urmia (Razmārā, p. 1), to Šamāšā' (deacon) Dāwīd Bar Urshan and his wife Nassimo. Andreōs attended the American Presbyterian College of Urmia, where he had a 'born again' experience in 1900.

In 1902, at age eighteen, he determined to go to America and made this journey through Tbilisi, Kiev, Warsaw, Berlin, and Hamburg to New York City. Moving to Chicago in 1906 ("Urshan"), with his name now anglicized, Andrew began a new and intense religious search; he gathered about him a group of fellow Assyrians to study the Bible in association with the nondenominational Moody Church there. Soon they embraced Pentecostalism. Andrew established the Persian Pentecostal Mission in the city (Shoumanov, p. 13), and by 1910 (French, p. 93) he was conducting revival meetings, which would take him throughout the Midwest.

After eleven years in the United States, he returned to Persia in late 1913 (Jacobsen, p. 239). During World War I, in February-March 1915, the terror of Turkish military incursions into Azarbaijan followed upon the Russian withdrawal from Urmia (see, e.g., Yohannan, pp. 119 ff.; Yonan, 1996, pp. 99-100; in detail for 1915-16, Gaunt) and drove many Assyrians from their homes. Now a refugee, Andrew, his father, mother, and four brothers walked



toward Georgia, hoping to escape through Russia back to the United States. The journey took several weeks of dodging marauding bands of Kurds and Turks. His father and mother died along the way and were buried in unmarked graves (account by his brother, Benjamin [1906-1998] in Urshan et al.).

During this travel Andrew experienced Russian Pentecostalism, and in 1916, back in Chicago, he resumed his ministry (Jacobsen, p. 239). He also married. In the following decades, he devoted his life to preaching nationwide, and he was active in Pentecostal organizational activity (Jacobsen, p. 241). Of his four children, his oldest son, Nathaniel Andrew (1920-2005; Burgess and van der Maas, eds., s.v.), presided over the United Pentecostal Church International, a leading Pentecostal denomination, for over twenty years.

Known as the “Persian Evangelist” (Jacobson, p. 241; “Urshan”), Andrew wrote many religious books and composed hymns (Figure 2). He published a periodical *The Witness of God* in 1917 that continued until his death. Here he serialized his life story, published under the title “The Life of Andrew bar David Urshan,” which later appeared as a book. Andrew has no writings in Assyrian [Neo-Aramaic](#).

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