

# The Doctrine of Tôwtsâ'ôwth (תּוֹצֵאת)

**Introduction:** When it comes to certain specifics in Scripture, sometimes I tend to become overly-detail-oriented, as in this case, an examination of the meaning of the word tôwtsâ'ôwth. I spent a couple of hours alone on just one passage (Num. 34) in order to get a sense of this word (by the way, I think I nailed it). My intention here is not to supply the average believer with information that he needs; my intention is that, the pastor-teacher or seminary student can have a question as to the meaning and use of this word, and, without spending several hours in study, as I have, get to the nitty gritty as fast as it takes him to skim this doctrine for its essence. If such a person needs to have the meaning justified, I have provided more than enough material herein to justify my position and conclusions with regards to the meaning and use of tôwtsâ'ôwth.

Topics		
Pronunciation and Spelling	Meanings	Hypotheses
An Examination of the First Occurrence of Tôwtsâ'ôwth	A Map of Canaan and the Passage in Question:	An Examination of All Scriptural Occurrences
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A Map of Canaan and the Passage in Question:	An Examination of All Scriptural Occurrences	How Ancient Translations Dealt with Tôwtsâ'ôwth in the Psalms and Proverbs
	Summary of the Doctrine of Tôwtsâ'ôwth	

- Pronunciation and spelling:** tôwtsâ'ôwth (תּוֹצֵאת) [pronounced *toh-tzaw-OHTH*]
- Meanings** already attributed to tôwtsâ'ôwth:
  - KJV renderings: *going [forth], goings, outgoing; issues; borders.*
  - Strong's renderings: properly (*only in plural collective*) *exit, that is, (geographical) boundary, or (figuratively) deliverance, (actively) source: - border (-s), going (-s) forth (out), issues, outgoing.* Strong's #8444.
  - BDB translations: *1) outgoing, border, a going out, extremity, end, source, escape; 1a) outgoing, extremity (of border); 1b) source (of life); 1c) escape (from death).* BDB #426.
  - Gesenius translations: *a going out, the place from which [a person or thing] goes forth [hence, a gate]; a fountain; the place of exit or termination.*
  - My problem is not with the general idea of this verb and what it means, but that there are such a plethora of meanings which we could assign to it.
- Cognates:** This comes from the very common verb: yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced *yaw-TZAWH*], which means *to go out, to come out, to come forth.* Strong's #3318 BDB #422. Therefore, the meaning *a going out, a going forth* is reasonable and apt. Bear in mind, however, that this word is always found in the plural, which obviously puts somewhat of a different spin on things.
- Hypotheses:** When initially examining the first two main passages which contain tôwtsâ'ôwth, I came up with 3 hypotheses:
  - Could tôwtsâ'ôwth mark not just a border, but a direction or compass change when describing this border? This would make tôwtsâ'ôwth appropriate to whole property descriptions, which take in all the compass points, and would not be interchangeable with the word *border*.

- b. Perhaps, tōwtsâ'ōwth represents the northern-most (southern-most, etc.) extent of a border.
  - c. Another hypothesis is, tōwtsâ'ōwth could represent the center of the north, south, east, west border.
5. **Passages:** Num. 34:4–5, 8–9, 12 Joshua 15:4, 7, 11 16:3, 8 17:9 18:12, 14, 18–19 19:14, 22, 29, 33 1Chron. 5:16 Psalm 68:20 Prov. 4:23 Ezek. 48:30

## An Examination of the first Occurrence of Tōwtsâ'ōwth

Interestingly enough, we find tōwtsâ'ōwth used first when describing the layout and borders of the Land of Canaan, which Israel was going to go into and take. I believe that it will be instructive to observe several different translators who are consistent with the use of tōwtsâ'ōwth in Num. 34:

"And your border shall turn south of the ascent of Akrabbim, and cross to Zin, and its **limit** shall be south of Kadesh-barnea. Then it shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass along to Azmon. And the border shall turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and its **limit** shall be at the sea. For the western border, you shall have the Great Sea and its coast. This shall be your western border. This shall be your northern border: from the Great Sea you shall draw a line to Mount Hor. From Mount Hor you shall draw a line to Lebo-hamath, and the **limit** of the border shall be at Zedad. Then the border shall extend to Ziphron, and its **limit** shall be at Hazar-enan. This shall be your northern border. You shall draw a line for your eastern border from Hazar-enan to Shepham. And the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain. And the border shall go down and reach to the shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth on the east. And the border shall go down to the Jordan, and its **limit** shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land as defined by its borders all around." (Num. 34:4–12, ESV).

"The southern side includes part of the Desert of Zin along the border of Edom. In the east the southern border starts from the end of the Dead Sea and turns south of the Akrabbim Pass. It then goes past Zin and **ends** at Kadesh Barnea. From there it goes to Hazar Addar and on to Azmon. From Azmon it turns toward the River of Egypt so that the border **ends** at the Mediterranean Sea. The western border is the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea. The northern border extends from the Mediterranean Sea to Mount Hor, and from Mount Hor to the border of Hamath so that it **ends** at Zedad. From there the border goes to Ziphron and **ends** at Hazar Enan. The eastern border extends from Hazar Enan to Shepham. From Shepham the border goes down to Riblah, east of Ain, and continues along the eastern slope of the Sea of Galilee. Then the border goes along the Jordan River so that it **ends** at the Dead Sea. "This will be your land and the borders around it." (Num. 34:3–12, God's Word™).

Your southern side will be from the Wilderness of Zin along the boundary of Edom. Your southern border on the east will begin at the east end of the Dead Sea. Your border will turn south of the Ascent of Akrabbim, proceed to Zin, and **end** south of Kadesh-barnea. It will go to Hazar-addar and proceed to Azmon. The border will turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, where it will **end** at the Mediterranean Sea. Your western border will be the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea; this will be your western border. This will be your northern border: From the Mediterranean Sea draw a line to Mount Hor; from Mount Hor draw a line to the entrance of Hamath, and the border **will reach** Zedad. Then the border will go to Ziphron and **end** at Hazar-enan. This will be your northern border. For your eastern border, draw a line from Hazar-enan to Shepham. The border will go down from Shepham to Riblah east of Ain. It will continue down and reach the eastern slope of the Sea of Chinnereth. Then the border will go down to the Jordan and **end** at the Dead Sea. This will be your land defined by its borders on all sides." (Num. 34:3–12; HCSB).

## An Examination of the first Occurrence of Tôwtsâ'ôwth

...and your border shall turn about southward of the ascent of `Akrabbim, and pass along to Tzin; and the **goings out** of it shall be southward of Kadesh-Barnea; and it shall go forth to Chatzar-Addar, and pass along to `Atzmon; and the border shall turn about from `Atzmon to the brook of Egypt, and the **goings out** of it shall be at the sea. For the western border, you shall have the great sea and the border [of it]: this shall be your west border. This shall be your north border: from the great sea you shall mark out for you Mount Hor; from Mount Hor you shall mark out to the entrance of Chamat; and the **goings out** of the border shall be at Tzedad; and the border shall go forth to Zifron, and the **goings out** of it shall be at Chatzar-`Enan: this shall be your north border. You shall mark out your east border from Chatzar-`Enan to Shefam; and the border shall go down from Shefam to Rivlah, on the east side of `Ayin; and the border shall go down, and shall reach to the side of the sea of Kinneret eastward; and the border shall go down to the Yarden, and the **goings out** of it shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land according to the borders of it round about (Num. 34:4–12; HNV). .

“...and the border has turned round to you from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim, and has passed on to Zin, and its **outgoings** have been from the south to Kadesh-Barnea, and it has gone out at Hazar-Addar, and has passed on to Azmon; and the border has turned round from Azmon to the brook of Egypt, and its **outgoings** have been at the sea. As to the west border, even the great sea has been to you a border; this is to you the west border. And this is to you the north border: from the great sea you mark out for yourselves mount Hor; from mount Hor you mark out to go in to Hamath, and the **outgoings** of the border have been to Zedad; and the border has gone out to Ziphron, and its **outgoings** have been at Hazar-Enan; this is to you the north border. And you have marked out for yourselves for the border eastward, from Hazar-Enan to Shepham; and the border has gone down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east of Ain, and the border has gone down, and has smitten against the shoulder of the sea of Chinneres eastward; and the border has gone down to the Jordan, and its **outgoings** have been at the Salt Sea; this is for you the land by its borders round about.” (Num. 34:4–12; Young’s Updated Translation).

By examining these fairly consistent translations, a few things should be clear (1) Even though tôwtsâ'ôwth is always plural in the Hebrew, it does not sound right so rendered into the English. *Outgoings* and *goings out* might be very literal renderings of tôwtsâ'ôwth, but, unfortunately, they do not convey any meaning to us (2) The translations which make the most sense render tôwtsâ'ôwth *limit* or *end*. This does not fix its meaning, by any means, as finding a smooth translation does not necessarily determine the meaning of a word, such a rendering does appear to be reasonable and consistent. (3) Its meaning does not appear to be much different from the word *border*. (4) An hypothesis occurs to me: could tôwtsâ'ôwth mark not just a border, but a direction or compass change when describing this border? This would make tôwtsâ'ôwth appropriate to whole property descriptions, which take in all the compass points, and would not be interchangeable with the word *border*. (5) Another related hypothesis is, tôwtsâ'ôwth represents the northern-most (southern-most, etc.) extent of a border. (6) Another hypothesis is, tôwtsâ'ôwth could represent the center of the north, south, east, west border.

## A Map of Canaan and the Passage in Question:

Now note an entire description of the borders of the land and compare it to the map: "Command the people of Israel, and say to them, When you enter the land of Canaan (this is the land that shall fall to you for an inheritance, the land of Canaan as defined by its borders), your south side shall be from the wilderness of Zin alongside Edom, and your southern border shall run from the end of the Salt Sea on the east. And your border shall turn south of the ascent of Akkrabbim, and cross to Zin, and its **limit** shall be south of Kadesh-barnea. Then it shall go on to Hazar-addar, and pass along to Azmon. And the border shall turn from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, and its **limit** shall be at the sea. For the western border, you shall have the Great Sea and its coast. This shall be your western border. This shall be your northern border: from the Great Sea you shall draw a line to Mount Hor. From Mount Hor you shall draw a line to Lebo-hamath, and the **limit** of the border shall be at Zedad. Then the border shall extend to Ziphron, and its **limit** shall be at Hazar-enan. This shall be your northern border. You shall draw a line for your eastern border from Hazar-enan to Shepham. And the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain. And the border shall go down and reach to the shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth on the east. And the border shall go down to the Jordan, and its **limit** shall be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land as defined by its borders all around." (Num. 34:2–12, ESV).



For understanding the use of *tôwtsâ'ôwth* when it first occurs in Scripture, it appears to not just mark a border, but a turning point in that border (when delineating the border). Therefore, *limit* or *end(s)* is a good rendering, as, when we find it used, we are speaking of the southern-most point, or the most southeast point of the Land of Canaan.

This map was taken from *The MacMillan Bible Atlas*; 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition; Aharoni, Avi-Yonah, Rainey, and Safrai; MacMillan; ©1993 by Carta; p. 47. The key to understanding this word is using this map.

## An Examination of All Scriptural Occurrences of the Word

Passage	Morphology and Additional Comments
<p>It goes out southward of the ascent of Akrabbim, passes along to Zin, and goes up south of Kadesh-barnea, along by Hezron, up to Addar, turns about to Karka, passes along to Azmon, goes out by the Brook of Egypt, and comes to its <b>end</b> at the sea. This shall be your south boundary. And the east boundary is the Salt Sea, to the mouth of the Jordan. And the boundary on the north side runs from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. And the boundary goes up to Beth-hoglah and passes along north of Beth-arabah. And the boundary goes up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. And the boundary goes up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley. And the boundary passes along to the waters of En-shemesh and <b>ends</b> at En-rogel. Then the boundary goes up by the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the southern shoulder of the Jebusite (that is, Jerusalem). And the boundary goes up to the top of the mountain that lies over against the Valley of Hinnom, on the west, at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. Then the boundary extends from the top of the mountain to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the cities of Mount Ephron. Then the boundary bends around to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim). And the boundary circles west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passes along to the northern shoulder of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon), and goes down to Beth-shemesh and passes along by Timnah. The boundary goes out to the shoulder of the hill north of Ekron, then the boundary bends around to Shikkeron and passes along to Mount Baalah and goes out to Jabneel. Then the boundary comes to an <b>end</b> at the sea (Joshua 15:3–7).</p>	<p>This is very similar to the passage in Numbers; each time we come across the word tôwtsâ'ôwth, we seem to be at a compass direction change, indicating again that this word appears to mark the southernmost (or most southwestern, etc.) point.</p>
<p>Then it goes down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and it <b>ends</b> at the sea. From Tappuah the boundary goes westward to the brook Kanah and <b>ends</b> at the sea (Joshua 16:3, 8a).</p>	<p>It's use here seems to be consistent with what I suggest above.</p>
<p>Then the boundary went down to the brook Kanah. These cities, to the south of the brook, among the cities of Manasseh, belong to Ephraim. Then the boundary of Manasseh goes on the north side of the brook and <b>ends</b> at the sea, the land to the south being Ephraim's and that to the north being Manasseh's, with the sea forming its boundary (Joshua 17:9–10a).</p>	<p>Although this is not the case in every instance of the use of tôwtsâ'ôwth, often it is used when coming to one of the seas in the Land of Promise.</p>

## An Examination of All Scriptural Occurrences of the Word

Passage	Morphology and Additional Comments
<p>On the north side their boundary began at the Jordan. Then the boundary goes up to the shoulder north of Jericho, then up through the hill country westward, and it <b>ends</b> at the wilderness of Beth-aven. From there the boundary passes along southward in the direction of Luz, to the shoulder of Luz (that is, Bethel), then the boundary goes down to Ataroth-addar, on the mountain that lies south of Lower Beth-horon. Then the boundary goes in another direction, turning on the western side southward from the mountain that lies to the south, opposite Beth-horon, and it <b>ends</b> at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a city belonging to the people of Judah. This forms the western side. And the southern side begins at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim. And the boundary goes from there to Ephron, to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. Then the boundary goes down to the border of the mountain that overlooks the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is at the north end of the Valley of Rephaim. And it then goes down the Valley of Hinnom, south of the shoulder of the Jebusites, and downward to En-rogel. Then it bends in a northerly direction going on to En-shemesh, and from there goes to Gelliloth, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim. Then it goes down to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben, and passing on to the north of the shoulder of Beth-arabah it goes down to the Arabah. Then the boundary passes on to the north of the shoulder of Beth-hoglah. And the boundary <b>ends</b> at the northern bay of the Salt Sea, at the south end of the Jordan: this is the southern border (Joshua 18:12–19).</p>	<p>As before, the word in question is used when describing the borders of a particular area (in this case, the territory of Benjamin); again, it appears to specifically be used when the description makes a turn.</p>

An Examination of All Scriptural Occurrences of the Word	
Passage	Morphology and Additional Comments
From there it passes along on the east toward the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin, and going on to Rimmon it bends toward Neah, then on the north the boundary turns about to Hannathon, and it <b>ends</b> at the Valley of Iphtahel; and Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem--twelve cities with their villages (Joshua 19:12–14).	At his point, when it comes to locating these various cities and areas, we might postulate that the use of tôwtsâ'ôwth marks a compass point extreme, which may be helpful to archeologists when postulating and searching for various ruins.
The boundary also touches Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and its boundary <b>ends</b> at the Jordan--sixteen cities with their villages (Joshua 19:22).	I don't know that these additional passages from Joshua 19 really add to our understanding; but I include them for sake of completeness.
Then the boundary turns to Ramah, reaching to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the boundary turns to Hosah, and it <b>ends</b> at the sea; Mahalab, Achzib, Ummah, Aphek and Rehob--twenty-two cities with their villages (Joshua 19:29–30).	These 4 passages Joshua 19 deal with the borders of Zebulun, Issachar, Asher and Naphtali (northern and far-northern Israel). Simeon's territory, covered at the beginning of Joshua 19, does not use the word tôwtsâ'ôwth, and it is possible that its exact boundaries are more difficult to fix for that reason (Simeon appears to be given a portion of Judah). Dan, the other territory dealt with in Joshua 19, is also found in the middle/southern region.
The sixth lot came out for the people of Naphtali, for the people of Naphtali, according to their clans. And their boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak in Zaananim, and Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum, and it <b>ended</b> at the Jordan. Then the boundary turns westward to... (Joshua 19:32–34a).	
Ahi the son of Abdiel, son of Guni, was chief in their fathers' houses, and they lived in Gilead, in Bashan and in its towns, and in all the pasturelands of Sharon to their <b>limits</b> (1Chron. 5:16).	The first few chapters of Chronicles are the genealogical chapters; although the territory of some tribes is mentioned, we find our word only in this one passage. Chronicles was written long after Numbers and Joshua, and this suggests to us that the use and meaning of tôwtsâ'ôwth remained consistent for many centuries.
Our God is a God of salvation, and to GOD, the Lord, belong <b>deliverances</b> from death (Psalm 68:20).	You will notice that the use of this word in Psalm 68 possibly takes on a whole new meaning.
Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the <b>springs</b> of life (Prov. 4:23).	Note again, what appears to be a whole new use of the word tôwtsâ'ôwth.

## An Examination of All Scriptural Occurrences of the Word

Passage	Morphology and Additional Comments
<p>"These shall be the <b>exits</b> of the city: On the north side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel. On the east side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan. On the south side, which is to be 4,500 cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun. On the west side, which is to be 4,500 cubits, three gates, the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali (Ezek. 48:30–34). .</p>	<p>This particular use of <i>tôwtsâ'ôwth</i> seems to be very much in keeping with our original understanding of the word: <i>a going out [plural]; an exit</i>.</p>

Some temporary conclusions: The use of the word *tôwtsâ'ôwth* appears to be consistent in Numbers and Joshua, marking the farthest compass borders of a territory, indicating where the border would change direction. One would also see this as an exit out of the territory delineated, which is in keeping with the use of *tôwtsâ'ôwth* in Ezekiel. So, what this does is leave us with the difficult question, how should we understand the use of *tôwtsâ'ôwth* in these two lone passages in the Psalms and the Proverbs.

### How *Tôwtsâ'ôwth* is Translated in the Psalms and Proverbs

A Literal Rendering	ACV	ESV	LTHB	NET Bible®	WEB	Young
<p>Our God <i>is</i> the God of salvation; and to Jehovah the Lord <i>are</i> the <i>tôwtsâ'ôwth</i> to/for/with respect to death. (Psalm 68:20).</p>	<p><i>escape</i> [from]</p>	<p><i>deliverance</i> [from]</p>	<p><i>issues</i> [of]</p>	<p><i>rescue</i> [from]</p>	<p><i>escape</i> [from]</p>	<p><i>outgoings</i> [of]</p>
<p>Guard [or, <i>keep</i>] from [or, <i>more than</i>] every [or, <i>all</i>] confinement [or, <i>prison, acts of guarding, observation</i>] your heart for from it [is] <i>tôwtsâ'ôwth</i> of life (Prov. 4:23).</p>	<p><i>issues</i></p>	<p><i>springs</i></p>	<p><i>issues</i></p>	<p><i>sources</i></p>	<p><i>wellspring</i></p>	<p><i>outgoings</i></p>

The examples given above are typical, and include most of the common renderings from the reasonably literal translations

Obviously, apart from Young, there is no consistency here with one another or with the passages in Numbers and Joshua. Furthermore, in Psalm 68:20, you will notice that all of the translators had to play fast and loose with the accompanying preposition, most of them either rendering it as the min preposition or as a construct, whereas, what we have here is the lâmed preposition. Only a few translators even translated *tôwtsâ'ôwth* the same way in the two passages noted.



Our two passages deal with *death* and *life*; which might be seen as two countries which border one another. You are in life, traveling along, and you come to death, and you make somewhat of a change in direction. You have gone as far as you can go in the realm of human life. So, life and death are like the boundaries given to Israel; the boundary of Israel goes to tôwtsâ'ôwth, and then it changes direction; the boundary of life goes as far as death, and then there is a change in direction. I believe that this is how we must understand tôwtsâ'ôwth in these two passages. Rendering it as *end (s)* or *limit (s)* is quite reasonable, as long as you maintain the back story on this word.

### How Ancient Translations Dealt with Tôwtsâ'ôwth in the Psalms and Proverbs

Literal Rendering	Latin	Greek	Syriac
Our God <i>is</i> the God of salvation; and to Jehovah the Lord <i>are</i> the tôwtsâ'ôwth to/for/with respect to death. (Psalm 68:20).	Our God is the God of salvation: and of the Lord, of the Lord are the <b>issues</b> from death.	Our God is the God of salvation; and to the Lord belongs the <b>issues</b> from death.	He that is our God is the God of salvation, the LORD God who has the <b>power</b> of life and death.
Guard [or, <i>keep</i> ] from [or, <i>more than</i> ] every [or, <i>all</i> ] confinement [or, <i>prison, acts of guarding, observation</i> ] your heart for from it [is] tôwtsâ'ôwth of life (Prov. 4:23).	With all watchfulness keep your heart, because life <b>issues</b> out from it.	Keep your heart with the utmost care; for out of these [words?] are the <b>issues</b> of life.	Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the <b>issues</b> of life.

As you will notice, the ancient translations really provide us with little help here.

#### 6. Conclusion:

- a. Tôwtsâ'ôwth comes from the verb *to go forth, to go out* and, at first glance, the rendering *outgoings* would seem apt; however, it simply does not make much sense rendering it in that way.
- b. Therefore, we examine this word based upon its actual usage in Scripture. It is typically found when the boundaries of a property are given (e.g., Num. 34); and it is specifically used when we are following a boundary in one particular direction (say, *southwest*) and then the boundary changes direction (say to, *south*).
- c. More difficult is the two times that we find tôwtsâ'ôwth in Psalm 68:20 and Prov. 4:23 where it is associated with *death* and *life*, respectively. Many translators not only give tôwtsâ'ôwth a whole new meaning in these passages (which is not completely out of line), but then most also make changes in the accompanying preposition to make everything come out sounding nice.
- d. It is preferable to try to more closely association the use of tôwtsâ'ôwth in the Psalms and Proverbs with its use elsewhere. Life and death are like two countries; you leave life and you enter into death; in between them is a boundary; when you step over this boundary, you have moved from the land of the living to the place of death. At this boundary, we have a change of compass direction. For the believer, we go from life to life everlasting; for the unbeliever, they go from life to death and damnation.
- e. Conveying this much information with an English word or phrase is rather difficult. I could not come up with any rendering which I was happy with. Therefore, I am going to stick with *limit* or *end*. However, when using this abbreviated English rendering, rolling around in the back of my head is the full meaning of tôwtsâ'ôwth. Reasonable renderings of tôwtsâ'ôwth follow:
- f. Psalm 68:20: **Our God is the God of salvation; and to Jehovah the Lord is the end [or, *limit*] with respect to death.**
- g. Prov. 4:23: **Guard your heart more than any prison, because from your heart is the end [or, *limit*] of life.**

Even though I have spent about 7 or 8 hours on this word, I have that thought, will anyone ever read this; this is a bit of minutia if there ever was. However, it took me most of this time to come to a reasonable conclusion as to the meaning and use of this word, which even involved whipping out a map and examining the map side-by-side the boundaries given where this word tôwtsâ'ôwth is used extensively (Num. 34).

## A Summary of the Doctrine of Tôwtsâ'ôwth

1. At first, one would think that the meaning of tôwtsâ'ôwth would be easy to ascertain. It comes from the verb *to go out*, and tôwtsâ'ôwth is always found in the plural, so the rendering *outgoings* seems like a quick fix (this is how Young consistently renders it). However, that meaning makes very little sense. The rendering *exit* is not too bad, but it does not really convey the meaning of the word.
2. Among the meanings offered for tôwtsâ'ôwth are:
  - a. KJV renderings: *going [forth], goings, outgoings; issues; borders*.
  - b. Strong's renderings: properly (*only in plural collective*) *exit, that is, (geographical) boundary, or (figuratively) deliverance, (actively) source: - border (-s), going (-s) forth (out), issues, outgoings*. Strong's #8444.
  - c. BDB translations: *1) outgoing, border, a going out, extremity, end, source, escape; 1a) outgoing, extremity (of border); 1b) source (of life); 1c) escape (from death)*. BDB #426.
  - d. Gesenius translations: *a going out, the place from which [a person or thing] goes forth [hence, a gate]; a fountain; the place of exit or termination*.
3. We find tôwtsâ'ôwth used primarily when giving a set of boundary points for a specific area or territory. We find it so used in: Num. 34:4–5, 8–9, 12 Joshua 15:4, 7, 11 16:3, 8 17:9 18:12, 14, 18–19 19:14, 22, 29, 33 1Chron. 5:16 Ezek. 48:30
4. If you examine a map along side Num. 34, it appears as though tôwtsâ'ôwth is used when a change of direction is noted. That is, if you are moving along a southern border and the border itself is going to change direction somewhat and move in a northwestern direction, then tôwtsâ'ôwth is used. Although I was unable to come up with a clear and simple English translation for this word, *end* or *limit* are reasonable renderings of tôwtsâ'ôwth, as long as one keeps in mind that a boundary direction change is also involved.
5. What appears to be the best translation is *end* or *limit*.
6. The two difficult passages where the rendering of tôwtsâ'ôwth is difficult is Psalm 68:20 and Prov. 4:23, and it is from these passages where we appear to get a myriad of weird meanings. Not only are these meanings not very helpful, but, in my cases in Psalm 68:20, the preposition found there is changed in order to accommodate a meaning which might not even properly apply.
  - a. One passage deals with life and the other with death, which one might see these as side-by-side territories, where there is a change of compass direction. One can come up to the boundary of life, which is death, and either enter into death or enter into life everlasting.
  - b. When one bears this in mind, a better understanding of these passages results.
  - c. Psalm 68:20: **Our God *is* the God of salvation; and to Jehovah the Lord *is* the end** [or, *limit*] **with respect to death**. Our relationship to God, when we come to the border between life and death, determines the direction that we move in next—whether we enter into death or whether we change direction and move into life eternal.
  - d. Prov. 4:23: **Guard your heart more than any prison, because from your heart is the end** [or, *limit*] **of life**. What determines our eternal destiny is what is in our heart—have we believed in Jesus Christ? Our thinking is key to this life and to the life which follows. What is in our heart determines the direction that we go in once we come up to the *limit* of life.
- 7.

Believe it or not, that is a summation of about 9 pages of careful analysis of this word, which is all found under the Doctrine of Tôwtsâ'ôwth.

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