

SEFER YETZIRAH 1.7



משנה ז': עשר ספירות בלימה נעוץ סופן בתחלתן ותחלתן
בסופן כשלהבת קשורה בגחלת שאדון יחיד ואין לו שני ולפני אחד
מה אתה סופר:

1.7: Ten sefirot of nothingness. Their end is embedded in their beginning and their beginning in their end, like a flame in a burning coal. For the Master is singular, He has no second, and before One, what do you count?
(*Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan translation*)

1.7: Ten sefirot/declarations of constraint. Their end is contained in their beginning, and their beginning in their end. As a flame connected with a burning coal, the Master is unified, and there is not a second. And before the One, what is there to count?
(*Doc Benton translation*)

The statement that the end is contained in the beginning and the beginning in the end says something about the simultaneity and, perhaps, the unreality of time. Not only do all things exist at once, but the beginning is the end and the end is the beginning. We just separate it out in our minds. An image is also given in this passage of a flame connected to a burning coal, and this is a very instructive image. The flame and the coal appear to be separate parts or components, but could the flame exist without the coal? And could the coal burn without fire? They appear as two, and yet like the Sun and its solar fire, they are inseparably one. You cannot have one without the other.

Furthermore, the text goes on to inform us that there is really nothing but this One. There is nothing to count before this One, and there is nothing after the One. When you are in front of the One, there is neither you nor not you nor any other thing. All has merged into the One.