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**NAN-JING CHAPTER ONE
QUESTIONS CONCERNING PULSE (Questions 1-22)**

Question 1

CONCERNING PULSE IN THE WRIST AND FREQUENCY OF NUTRITIVE AND DEFENCE ENERGIES CIRCULATION

The twelve master meridians have their respective arteries, but the pulse is to be taken at the wrist alone in order to determine the life and death of the five viscera and six bowels and in order to make predictions about the outcome of the disease, either good or bad. Why is that?

The answer may be presented as follows: The wrist is the gathering place of the twelve master meridians, and it belongs to the great Yin meridian of the hand. In a normal person, the energy of meridian will travel a distance of three chuns during each act of inspiration, with a total of six chuns per act of respiration. A person will perform a total of thirteen thousand five hundred respirations during one day and one night with the result that the energy of meridian will have travelled throughout the body for fifty times during that period. During the one hundred Ke (with one Ke equivalent to 14 minutes and 24 seconds) period, the nutritive and defence energies circulate twenty-five times by day and another twenty-five times at night which is called one complete circulation; and then they meet at the wrist of the great Yin of hand again. As the wrist is the starting and ending point of the five viscera and six bowels, it follows that pulse at the wrist should be taken in making diagnosis.

Question 2

CONCERNING THE REGIONS FOR PULSE-TAKING: MOUTH OF ENERGY

The region where the pulse is taken is divided into the Che section and the Chun section; what does it mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: The Che and Chun sections are the great and important gathering places of meridians. The section between the juncture (which is located at the same level as the radial styloid process) and the Chitse point (namely, pulse in the arm of Lung 5), is the Che section which is governed by the Yin. Therefore, the Che section measures one Che (equivalent to ten Chuns), and the Chun section measures one Chun in length. The pulse that occurs within a distance of one Chun upward from the juncture may be taken which is called the Che pulse, or the proximal pulse; the pulse that occurs within a distance of nine Fens (namely, nine tenths of a Chun), downward from the juncture may be taken which is called the Chun pulse, or the distal pulse.

Therefore, the total distance of the region where the pulse is taken measures one Chun and nine Fens which is called the pulses of Che and Chun, or the proximal and distal pulses.

Question 3

CONCERNING ABNORMALLY EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY PULSE AT THE WRIST

The pulse may be abnormally excessive or deficient; Yin pulse or Yang pulse may be attacking each other to cause falling and overflowing as well as closing and resisting; how do you account for that? The answer may be presented as follows: The pulse in the region in front of the juncture (referring to the middle region) should be taken by superficial pressure within the distance of nine Fens, because it is a Yang pulse (referring to the distal pulse or the Chun pulse). If this pulse occurs beyond the distance of nine Fens, it is called an excess pulse; if this pulse occurs less than the distance of nine Fens, it is a deficiency pulse. If the pulse extends all the way to reach the Yuchi point to cause overflowing, it is Yang being locked out and Yin being obstructed within, which means that Yin is attacking Yang.

The pulse in the region behind the juncture should be taken by deep pressure within the distance of one Chun, because it is a Yin pulse (referring to the proximal pulse, namely, the Che pulse). If this pulse occurs beyond the distance of one Chun, it is called an excess pulse; if this pulse occurs less than the distance of one Chun, it is called a deficiency pulse. If the pulse extends all the way to reach the Chihitse point, to cause falling (of pulse), it is called Yin being locked out and Yang being obstructed within, which means that Yang is attacking Yin.

Therefore, it is said that the falling and overflowing pulses are true organic pulses; and when such pulses occur, the patient will die, even though he displays no other deadly symptoms.

Question 4

CONCERNING YIN-YANG CLASSIFICATIONS OF PULSE

There are methods of classifying pulse into Yin and Yang; what are they?

The answer may be presented as follows: Expiration has something to do with the heart and lungs, and inspiration has something to do with the kidneys and the liver; the spleen receives the flavours of grain in between inspiration and expiration so that the pulse occurs in the middle. A superficial pulse is a Yang pulse, and a deep pulse is a Yin pulse which is the method of classifying the pulse into Yin and Yang.

How to draw a distinction when both the heart and the lungs display a superficial pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: When a superficial pulse is also big and dispersing, it is the pulse of the heart; and when the pulse is also short and retarded, it is the pulse of the lungs.

How to draw a distinction when both the liver and kidneys display a deep pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: When a deep pulse is also persisting and long, it is the pulse of the liver; when a deep pulse is also soft and excess (solid), it is the pulse of the kidneys. The spleen is in charge of the middle burning space, and for that reason, its pulse occurs in the middle (in

between the superficial and deep), and this is the method of classifying the pulse into Yin pulse and Yang pulse.

The pulse may display one Yin and one Yang; it may display one Yin and two Yangs; it may display one Yin and three Yangs; it may display one Yang and one Yin, it may display one Yang and two Yins; it may display one Yang and three Yins; does this mean that there is a total of six pulses occurring simultaneously at the wrist?

The answer may be presented as follows: It does not mean a simultaneous occurrence of six pulses, rather, it only means that there is a distinction among the superficial pulse, the deep pulse, the long pulse, the short pulse, the sliding pulse, and the retarded pulse; and a superficial pulse is a Yang pulse, a sliding pulse is a Yang pulse, a long pulse is a Yang pulse; on the other hand, a deep pulse is a Yin pulse, a short pulse is a Yin pulse, a retarded pulse is a Yin pulse. The expression that the pulse may display one Yin and one Yang means that the pulse is deep and sliding; the expression that the pulse may display one Yin and two Yangs means that the pulse is deep sliding and long; the expression that the pulse may display one Yin and three Yangs means that the pulse is superficial, sliding and long, and occasionally deep; the expression that the pulse may display one Yang and one Yin means that the pulse is superficial and retarded; the expression that the pulse may display one Yang and two Yins means that the pulse is long, deep, and retarded; the expression that the pulse may display one Yang and three Yins means that the pulse is deep, retarded, and short, and occasionally superficial. The good and bad outlooks of disease may be determined by the pulse in the different regions of the meridians involved.

Question 5

CONCERNING LIGHT AND HEAVY PRESSURE OF FINGERS IN PULSE-TAKING

How to draw a distinction between light pressure and heavy pressure in taking the pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: At the beginning, the pressure of fingers may be as heavy as the weight of three beans which reaches the skin and hair corresponding to the lungs; the pressure of fingers equivalent to the weight of six beans will reach the pulse around the blood vessels that correspond to the heart; the pressure of fingers equivalent to the weight of nine beans will reach the pulse in between muscles which correspond to the spleen region; the pressure of fingers equivalent to the weight of twelve beans will reach the pulse in between tendons which correspond to the liver region. The pressure of fingers reaching the bones that feels a hurried pulse when the fingers are lifting up to lighten the pressure corresponds to the kidneys region. This is the distinction between light pressure and heavy pressure.

Question 6

CONCERNING YIN-YANG AND DEFICIENCY-EXCESS CLASSIFICATIONS OF PULSE

It is said that the pulse may display an abundant Yin and a deficient Yang or an abundant Yang and a deficient Yin; what does that mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: When a pulse taken by superficial pressure appears fine-soft and small, but it becomes excess and big when taken by deep pressure, then it means the presence of an abundant Yin and deficient Yang. When a pulse taken by deep pressure appears fine-soft and small, but it becomes excess and big when taken by superficial pressure, it means the presence of an abundant Yang and deficient Yin. This is the meaning of Yin and Yang, deficiency and excess, in pulse diagnosis.

Question 7

CONCERNING SEASONAL PULSE

The Classics stated: When the pulse of little Yang arrives, it appears suddenly big and suddenly small, suddenly short and suddenly long; when the pulse of bright Yang arrives, it appears superficial, big, and short; when the pulse of the great Yang arrives, it appears forceful, big, and long; when the pulse of the great Yin arrives, it appears tight, big, and long; when the pulse of the little Yin arrives, it appears tight, fine, and disappearing; when the pulse of the decreasing Yin arrives, it appears deep, short, and thick. Are the above six pulses the pulses of a normal person or those of a diseased person?

The answer may be presented as follows: They are, all of them, the reigning seasonal pulses.

What months do their energies belong to and how many days do their reigns last?

The answer may be presented as follows: The reign of little Yang begins right after winter solstice and lasts for sixty days, followed by the reign of bright Yang which also lasts for sixty days, followed by the reign of great Yang which also lasts for sixty days, followed by the reign of great Yin which also lasts for sixty days, followed by the reign of little Yin which also lasts for sixty days, followed by the reign of decreasing Yin which also lasts for sixty days, bringing about a total of three-hundred-sixty days to constitute one year. Such are general descriptions of the three Yins and three Yangs in the reign.

Question 8

CONCERNING DISTAL PULSE OF THE WRIST WITH DEATH

The patient may die with a peaceful pulse in the Chun region (namely, the distal pulse), why is that?

The answer may be presented as follows: The twelve master meridians are, all of them, connected with the sources of original energy, so that the sources of original energy are the roots of the twelve master meridians which are called the moving energies in between the kidneys, they are the origins of the five viscera and six bowels, and the roots of the twelve master meridians, and they are also the doors of respiration, the fountains of the Triple Burning space, and they are also called the defending spirits of the body to resist the attack of vicious energies. Therefore life energies are the roots of a person, and when the roots are extinguished, the branches and leaves will be withered. The reason that a patient may die with a peaceful pulse in the Chun region is due to an internal exhaustion of life energy.

Question 9**CONCERNING DIFFERENTIATION OF ORGANIC DISEASES ON THE BASIS OF PULSE PHENOMENA**

How do we distinguish organic diseases?

The answer may be presented as follows: A rapid pulse indicates the disease of bowels while a slow pulse indicates the disease of viscera. A rapid pulse means heat while a slow pulse means cold.

Diseases of Yang meridians give rise to heat while diseases of Yin meridians give rise to cold. Hence, the organic diseases may be distinguished.

Question 10**CONCERNING TEN VARIATIONS OF ONE SINGLE PULSE**

What is meant by ten variations of one single pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: The diseases of the five viscera which are soft organs and those of the six bowels which are hard organs may affect each other. If the pulse of the heart appears extremely acute, it means that the vicious energy of the liver is invading the heart; if the pulse of the heart appears slightly acute, it means that the vicious energy of the gall bladder is invading the small intestine. If the pulse of the heart appears extremely big, it means that the vicious energy is originated from the heart itself; if the pulse of the heart appears slightly big, it means the vicious energy of the small intestine is originated from the small intestine to attack the small intestine. If the pulse of the heart is extremely relaxed, it means the vicious energy of the spleen is invading the heart; if the pulse of the heart appears slightly relaxed, it means the vicious energy of the stomach is invading the small intestine. If the pulse of the heart appears extremely retarded, it means that the vicious energy of the lungs is invading the heart; if the pulse of the heart appears slightly retarded, it means that the vicious energy of the large intestine is invading the small intestine. If the pulse of the heart appears extremely deep, it means that the vicious energy of the kidneys is invading the heart; if the pulse of the heart appears slightly deep, it means that the vicious energy of the bladder is invading the small intestine. Thus, the five organs are susceptible to the attack of hard and soft vicious energies which is why one single pulse may give rise to ten variations.

Question 11**CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RESTING PULSE AND DISEASES OF THE KIDNEYS**

The Classics stated: When the pulse rests once at an interval of less than fifty beats, it means one organ is without energy; what is that organ?

The answer may be presented as follows: In the course of inspiration, air moves in along the organs located in the Yin region; in the course of expiration, air moves out along the organs located in the Yang region (such as the heart and lungs). Now, when the air moves in to stop short of reaching the kidneys and turns back as soon as it reaches the liver, we know that the organ that is without energy must be the kidneys, whose energy becomes exhausted first.

Question 12**CONCERNING THE ERROR OF SEDATING THE DEFICIENCY AND TONING UP THE EXCESS**

The Classics stated: It would be committing an error for an acupuncturist to tone up the organs in the external region (referring to the heart and the lungs) when the pulse indicates an exhaustion of the organs in the internal region (referring to the liver and the kidneys); it would be committing an error if the acupuncturist should tone up the organs in the internal region when the pulse of the five viscera indicates an exhaustion of the organs in the external region. How to draw a distinction between internal and external exhaustion?

The answer may be presented as follows: The expression that the pulse of the five viscera has already been exhausted internally points to the internal exhaustion of the energy of the kidneys and liver; and it would be committing an error to tone up the heart and lungs. The expression that the pulse of the five viscera has already been exhausted in the external region mean that the heart and lungs are exhausted in the external region, and it would be committing an error to tone up the kidneys and liver. To tone up the Yin while the Yang has been exhausted or to tone up the Yang while the Yin has been exhausted is called 'toning up the excess and sedating the deficiency' which means to decrease the shortage and increase the excess. And if this method of treatment causes death, it means the physician has killed the patient.

Question 13**CONCERNING APPLICATION OF COMPLEXION, PULSE, AND SKIN ALONG THE ULNA IN DIAGNOSIS**

The Classics stated: If the presence of complexion is not accompanied by its corresponding pulse, but by the pulse that subjugates it, the patient will die; if the presence of complexion is accompanied by its corresponding pulse, the patient will recover. What is meant by the correspondence between complexion and the pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: The five viscera have their five respective colors all of which show up in the face, and they should correspond to the pulse at the wrist and the skin along the ulna. If the complexion is green, the pulse must be wiry and acute; red should correspond to a superficial and big and dispersing pulse; yellow should correspond to a relaxed and big pulse; white should correspond to superficial and retarded and short pulse; black should correspond to deep and soft and sliding pulse. This is what is meant by correspondence between complexion and pulse.

A rapid pulse should point to hot skin along the ulna; an acute pulse should point to tight skin along the ulna; a relaxed pulse should point to relaxed skin along the ulna; a retarded pulse should point to retarded skin along the ulna; a sliding pulse should point to sliding skin along the ulna.

The five viscera have their respective corresponding voice, color, offensive smell, and flavour which should correspond to the pulse at the wrist and the skin along the ulna as well. If not, it means presence of disease. If green is present along with a superficial-retarded-short pulse or along with a big-relaxed pulse, it means a mutual subjugating pulse; if it is present along with a

superficial-big-dispersing pulse or along with a small-sliding pulse, it means a mutual generating pulse.

The Classics stated: The lower-class physician will know only one type of diagnosis; a middle-class physician will know two types of diagnosis; and a high-class physician will know all the three types of diagnosis (namely, pulse, complexion, and skin along the ulna). A high-class physician will cure nine out of ten patients; a middle-class physician will cure seven out of ten patients; and a lower-class physician will cure six out of ten patients.

Question 14

CONCERNING DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH BACKWARD AND FORWARD PULSE AND THEIR TREATMENT

A pulse may be retreating or progressing; what does it mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: When a pulse is progressing, it should arrive twice per expiration which is a normal pulse. If the pulse arrives three times per expiration, it is departing from meridians; if the pulse arrives four times per expiration, it means the pure energy is being deprived of; if it arrives five times per expiration, it is a dead pulse; if it arrives six times per expiration, life is finished. This is how the pulse is progressing to become a sick pulse.

What is meant by a retreating pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: If the pulse arrives once per expiration, it is called departing from meridians; if the pulse arrives once every two expirations, it means the pure energy is being deprived of; if it arrives once every three expirations, it is a dead pulse; if it arrives once every four expirations, it means life is finished. This is how the pulse is retreating to become a sick pulse. A progressing pulse points to a disease developing from the lower region (kidneys) to the upper region (the lungs); a retreating pulse points to a disease developing from the upper region to the lower region of the body.

How does a retreating pulse cause disease?

The answer may be presented as follows: The first stage of a retreating pulse will cause disease to the skin and hair that results in withered skin and falling of hair; the second stage of a retreating pulse will cause harm to the blood vessels that results in a deficiency of blood unable to nourish the five viscera and the six bowels; the third stage of a retreating pulse will cause harm to the muscles that results in shrinking of muscles with food energy incapable of nourishing the muscles; the fourth stage of a retreating pulse will cause a relaxation of tendons that become incapable of flexing and holding; the fifth stage of a retreating pulse will cause harm to the bones that results in weakened bones with an inability to rise from bed. The ways in which a progressing pulse causes disease are just the opposite. A retreating pulse will cause death gradually from the upper region to the lower region, and when the patient begins to suffer weakened bones with inability to rise from bed, the patient is bound to die. On the other hand, a progressing pulse will cause death gradually from the lower region to the upper region, and when the patient shows signs of withered skin and falling of hair, he is bound to die.

How to treat disease caused by a retreating pulse?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the lungs are harmed, the energy should be toned up; when the heart is harmed, the nutritive and defence energies should be regulated; when the spleen is harmed, dietary therapy should be administered in order to strike a balance between cold and warm; when the liver is harmed, appropriate herbs should be used to relax the liver; when the kidneys are harmed, the pure energy should be strengthened. Such are the methods of treatment.

A pulse may arrive twice per expiration and arrive twice per inspiration; a pulse may arrive three times per expiration or arrive three times per inspiration; a pulse may arrive four times per expiration or arrive four times per inspiration; a pulse may arrive five times per expiration or five times per inspiration; a pulse may arrive six times per expiration or six times per inspiration; a pulse may arrive once per expiration and once per inspiration; a pulse may arrive once every two expirations or arrive once every two inspirations; a pulse may arrive twice per respiration. How do we make use of such pulses to know about disease?

The answer may be presented as follows: When a pulse arrives twice per expiration and twice per inspiration, neither big nor small, it is a normal pulse. When a pulse arrives three times per expiration and three times per inspiration, it indicates a disease at its initial stage; if the pulse at the wrist is big while the pulse in the arm is small, it is indicative of headache and dizziness, if the pulse at the wrist is small while the pulse in the arm is big, it is indicative of congested chest and shortness of breath. When a pulse arrives four times per expiration and four times per inspiration, it signifies that the disease is getting worse; if the pulse in question appears forceful and big, it is indicative of congested and depressed chest; if the pulse in question appears deep and fine, it points to abdominal pain; if the pulse in question appears sliding, it means that the patient is under the attack of the vicious energy of heat; if the pulse in question appears retarded, it means that the patient is under the attack of the vicious energy of dampness.

When a pulse arrives five times per expiration and five times per inspiration, it means the patient is in critical conditions; and if the pulse in question appears deep and fine with symptoms getting worse at night or if the pulse appears superficial and big with symptoms getting worse during the daytime, neither big nor small, the disease may be critical, but it is still curable; but if the pulse appears either big or small, the disease is difficult to cure.

When the pulse arrives six times per expiration and six times per inspiration, it is a dead pulse; and if the pulse in question appears deep and fine, the patient will die at night; if the pulse appears superficial and big, the patient will die during the daytime.

When the pulse arrives once per expiration and once per inspiration, it is called a retreating pulse, and the patient may be able to walk, but he will stay in bed due to a deficiency of blood and energy.

When the pulse arrives once every two expirations and once every two inspirations, namely, once per respiration, it is called absence of soul, in which case, the patient will die; and although the patient may be able to walk, it is called the walking of a dead man.

When the pulse appears at the wrist but not in the arm, vomiting will occur, and if vomiting does not occur, the patient will die. When the pulse appears in the arm but not at the wrist, the conditions may be critical but still harmless, because pulse in the arm may be compared to the roots of a tree.

Although the leaves of a tree may be withering, the roots are still alive which means that the patient's original energy is still in existence and for that reason, the patient will not die.

Question 15

CONCERNING NORMAL AND ABNORMAL PULSE IN FOUR SEASONS

The Classics stated: Wiry pulse in spring, hooky pulse in summer, hairy pulse in autumn, and stony pulse in winter; are they pulses in successive reigns or sick pulses?

The answer may be presented as follows: Wiry, hooky, hairy, and stony pulses are pulses of the four seasons. The presence of wiry pulse in spring may be explained by reference to the fact that the liver is east and wood which indicates growing of everything at the very beginning stage such as a tree without leaves, so that the pulse appears soft, weak, and long which is a description of a wiry pulse. The presence of hooky pulse in summer may be explained by reference to the fact that the heart is south and fire which indicates a flourishing of everything such as trees full of branches and leaves hanging and spreading downward like hooks, so that a hooky pulse appears rapid on arriving and slow on departing.

The presence of hairy pulse in autumn may be explained by reference to the fact that the lungs are west and metal which indicates the terminating stage of everything such as falling of flourishing leaves of grasses and trees with only branches remaining that look like tiny hairs, so that the hairy pulse appears light, deficient, and superficial on arrival.

The presence of stony pulse in winter may be explained by reference to the fact that the kidneys are north and water which indicate the storage of everything, such as freezing of water as hard as stones at the peak of winter, so that the pulse appears deep, soft and sliding which is called a stony pulse.

Such are the pulses of the four seasons.

What will happen when disease occurs?

The answer is: Wiry pulse is the pulse of spring, and appearance of any pulse other than the wiry pulse in spring signifies disease.

What are the other pulses?

The answer may-be presented as follows: When the pulse appears excessive and strong, it indicates the excess and an external disease; if the pulse appears deficient and disappearing, it indicates the deficiency and internal disease. If the pulse appears like a waving leaf of an elm, it is a normal pulse; if it appears as solid and sliding as a long stick, it is a diseased pulse; and if it appears acute, unyielding, and strong, not unlike the bow being pulled tight for shooting, it is a dead pulse.

When the spring pulse appears slightly wiry, it is a normal pulse; when the spring pulse appears very wiry with scanty stomach energy, it is a diseased pulse; when the spring pulse appears wiry without stomach energy, it is a dead pulse; stomach energy is the root of spring.

The pulse in summer should appear hooky, otherwise it is a diseased pulse. What is meant by otherwise?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the energy appears solid and strong, it is in excess and points to an external disease; when the energy appears hollow and weak, it is in deficiency and points to an internal disease. When the pulse appears as circular as a jade chain and as smooth as a

jade ball, it is a normal pulse; when the pulse appears as quick as a chicken lifting its legs in walking, it is a diseased pulse; when the pulse appears hard and strong on light pressure but as hard as the hook of a leather belt on heavy pressure, it is a dead pulse. When the pulse in summer appears slightly hooky, it is a normal pulse; when it appears very hooky with scanty stomach energy, it is a diseased pulse; when it appears hooky without stomach energy, it is a diseased pulse; stomach energy is the root of summer.

The pulse in autumn should appear hairy, otherwise, it is a diseased pulse. What is meant by otherwise?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the energy appears solid and strong, it is in excess; and points to an external disease; when the energy appears hollow and weak, it is in deficiency and points to an internal disease; when the pulse appears as abundant as the cover of a cart and becomes bigger on pressure, it is a normal pulse; when the pulse moves neither upward nor downward not unlike chicken feathers and appears in decline on pressure not unlike hairs being blown by the wind, it is a dead pulse. When the pulse in autumn appears slightly hairy, it is a normal pulse; when it appears very hairy with scanty stomach energy, it is a diseased pulse; when it appears hairy without stomach energy, it is a dead pulse; stomach energy is the root of autumn.

The pulse in winter should appear stony, otherwise, it is a diseased pulse. What is meant by otherwise?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the energy appears solid and strong, it is in excess and points to an external disease; when the energy appears hollow and weak, it is in deficiency and points to an internal disease; when the pulse appears big in the upper and small in the lower region, and as soft and sliding as the mouth of a bird, it is a normal pulse; but if it appears as successive as the peckings of a bird, and slightly bent in the middle, it is a diseased pulse; if the pulse comes on as relaxed as a knot already untied, and departs as quickly as a stone shot from a bow, it is a dead pulse. When the pulse in winter appears slightly stony, it is a normal pulse; when it appears very stony with scanty stomach energy, it is a diseased pulse; when it appears stony without stomach energy, it is a dead pulse; stomach energy is the root of winter.

The stomach is the sea of water and grains, it is the main source of energy in support of the pulses in the four seasons to act as their roots. For this reason, stomach energy accounts for change in disease and life and death of a person. The spleen is in charge of the middle territory, and when the spleen is in normal conditions, no visible signs will show up; it is only when the spleen is in decline, that we begin to see such signs as the pulse like the pecking of a bird and like the leaking of a water tank, all of which point to a decline in the spleen.

Question 16

CONCERNING THE SYMPTOMS OF DISEASES OF FIVE VISCERA

There are nine types of pulse to be taken in three regions, there are Yin and Yang pulses, there are light and heavy methods of taking the pulse, there are sixty variations of pulse, and a given pulse may vary with the four seasons; pulse diagnosis had been established a long long time ago, but now each

physician claims that his method of pulse diagnosis is a true and correct one; how do we distinguish a true and correct method from a false and incorrect one?

The answer may be presented as follows: This may be done by reference to the internal and external diseases.

How are we going to do this by reference to the disease?

The answer may be presented as follows: If the pulse taken indicates a liver disease, it must be confirmed by the following symptoms, otherwise, it is not a liver disease: love of clean, green complexion, love of anger, and internally, movement of energy on the left side of the navel which appears hard or painful on pressure, with swelling of four limbs, slow movements, difficulty in urination and bowel movements, twitching of tendons; if such symptoms occur, it is a liver disease, otherwise, it is not a liver disease.

If the pulse taken indicates a heart disease, it must be confirmed by the following symptoms: red complexion, dry mouth, love of laughter, and internally, movement of energy above the navel that appears hard or painful on pressure, mental depression, heart pain, hot sensations on palm of hand with vomiting; if such symptoms occur, it is a heart disease, otherwise, it is not a heart disease.

If the pulse taken indicates a spleen disease, it must be confirmed by the following symptoms: yellowish complexion, love of belching, love of contemplation, and internally, movements of energy around the navel that appear hard or painful on pressure, abdominal swelling, indigestion, heavy sensations of the body, pain in the joints, fatigue, love of sleep, inability of the four limbs to flex; if such symptoms occur, it is a spleen disease, otherwise, it is not a spleen disease.

If the pulse taken indicates a lung disease, it must be confirmed by the following symptoms: white complexion, frequent sneeze, being in sorrow and worry, feeling unhappy, love of crying, and internally, movements of energy on the right side of navel that appear hard or painful on pressure, panting and cough, shivering with cold that alternates with hot sensations; if such symptoms occur, then it is a lungs disease; otherwise, it is not a lungs disease.

If the pulse taken indicates a kidneys disease, it must be confirmed by the following symptoms: externally, black complexion, love of fear and yawning, and internally, movements of energy below the navel that appear hard or painful on pressure, upsurging energy, acute pain in the lower abdomen, diarrhea with heavy sensations in the lower region, cold sensations around the tibia region; if such symptoms occur, then it is a kidneys disease; otherwise, it is not a kidneys disease.

Question 17

CONCERNING PREDICTIONS OF DISEASE IN RELATION TO ITS CORRESPONDING REVERSE PULSE

The Classics stated: A disease may cause death, or it may recover by itself without treatment, or it may last for months or years without recovery; can we make predictions about life and death by pulse diagnosis?

The answer may be presented as follows: Yes, this can be done. In making diagnosis, when the patient closes his eyes with dislike of seeing people, the pulse should be strong, acute, and long,

which is a liver pulse; conversely, if the pulse appears superficial, short, and retarded, which is a lungs pulse, then the patient will die.

In making diagnosis, when the patient opens his eyes, and feels thirsty, with hard spots below his heart, the pulse should be tight, solid, and rapid; conversely, if the pulse appears deep, retard, and weak, then the patient will die.

In making diagnosis, if the patient displays the symptoms of vomiting of blood with nosebleed, the pulse should be deep and fine; conversely, if the pulse appears superficial, big, and persisting, then the patient will die.

In making diagnosis, when the patient displays the symptoms of talking in dreams and incoherent talking, there should be fever and the pulse should be forceful and big; conversely, if the patient displays cold hands and feet with a deep and fine and weak pulse, then the patient will die.

In making diagnosis, when the patient displays the symptoms of abdominal swelling and diarrhea, the pulse should be weak, fine and retarded; conversely, if the pulse appears tight, big, and sliding, the patient will die.

Question 18

CONCERNING THREE REGIONS OF TAKING PULSE IN ACCORD WITH VISCERA AND BOWELS

There are three sections for taking the pulse in the wrist, and each region includes four meridians, namely, the great Yin and the bright Yang of hand and the great Yang and the little Yin of foot, in the upper and lower regions respectively; what does this mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: The great Yin of hand and the bright Yang of hand are both metal; the little Yin of foot and the great Yang of foot are both water; metal generates water, and water flows downward, never upward, and for that reason, they are in the lower region. The decreasing Yin of foot and the little Yang of foot are wood which generate the great Yang of hand and the little Yin of hand which are fire; fire can only burn upward and never downward, and for that reason, they are in the upper region. The master of heart of hand and the little Yang of hand are fire that generates the little Yin of foot and the bright Yang of foot which are earth; earth is in charge of the middle palace, and for that reason, it is in the middle region. Such are the mutual generating and nourishing patterns among the children and mothers in the five elements theory.

There are nine types of pulse to be taken in three regions at the wrist, but what disease does each of them indicate ?

The answer may be presented as follows: The three regions where pulse is to be taken are the Chun region (distal pulse), Kuan region (middle pulse), and the Che region (proximal pulse); the nine types of pulse include superficial, middle, and deep pulses of each region. The pulse in the upper region models on the heaven, and it is in charge of the disease extending from the chest to the head; the pulse in the middle region models on the man, and it is in charge of the disease extending from the diaphragm downward to the navel; the pulse in the lower region models on the earth, and it is in charge of the disease extending from the navel downward to the foot region. In treatment, it is necessary to examine the region before acupuncture therapy is administered.

A disease may be deep, stagnant, prolonged, and accumulative to be coagulated; are we able to know about them by pulse diagnosis?

The answer may be presented as follows: In making diagnosis, if there appears accumulated energy on the right ribs, and if the pulse of the lungs appears clotting, then, a highly clotting pulse points to severe coagulations, and a lightly clotting pulse points to presence of light energy.

What if energy coagulations appear on the right ribs without the clotting pulse of lungs?

The answer may be presented as follows: The pulse on the right hand should be deep and hidden, even though there is no lungs pulse present.

Do we apply the same method of diagnosis to deal with chronic symptoms in the external region?

The answer may be presented as follows: A clotting pulse is a pulse that stops occasionally without a regular frequency; a hidden pulse is a pulse that is travelling below the tendons; a superficial pulse is a pulse that travels through the flesh. The same applies to superficial and deep pulses on the right and left hands. If the blotting and hidden pulse appears without the presence of internal coagulations, or the superficial and clotting pulse appears without external chronic disease, or presence of coagulations without the clotting and hidden pulse, or presence of external chronic symptoms without a superficial and clotting pulse, it means that pulse fails to correspond to disease or disease fails to correspond to pulse, and in that case, the disease is a fatal one.

Question 19

CONCERNING NORMAL AND ABNORMAL PULSE IN MEN AND WOMEN

The Classics stated: Pulse may be upstream or down-stream, and there are established patterns of man and woman regarding pulse such as weak pulse as opposed to strong pulse; what does it mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: Man is born in In, and In is wood which is Yang; woman is born in Shen, and Shen is metal which is Yin. Therefore, male pulse appears in the Chun region above the Kuan, while female pulse appears in the Che region below the Kuan; and this is why male pulse is constantly weak in the Che region while female pulse is constantly weak in the Chun region, which is the normal pattern of pulse.

When the pattern is reversed, namely, a man displays a female pulse and a woman displays a male pulse, what disease will occur?

The answer may be presented as follows: When a man displays a female pulse, it is symptomatic of deficiency; and it points to an internal disease; when such pulse occurs on the left, the disease is on the left, and when such pulse occurs on the right side, the disease is on the right side, which means that disease follows the pulse. On the other hand, when a woman displays male pulse, it is symptomatic of excess, and it points to the disease of the four limbs; when such pulse occurs on the left, the disease will be on the left, and when pulse occurs on the right, the disease will be on the right, which means that disease follows the pulse.

Question 20**CONCERNING HIDDEN PULSE**

The Classics stated: There is something called the hidden pulse; but what particular organ is the hidden pulse hiding ?

The answer may be presented as follows: It refers to mutual attacks of Yin and Yang and their hiding in each other's place. Yang pulse displaying in the Yin region means Yang is attacking Yin, and although the pulse may frequently be deep, retarded, and short, it is called Yin hiding within the Yang. On the other hand, Yin pulse displaying in the Yang region means Yin is attacking Yang, and although the pulse may frequently be superficial, sliding, and long, it is called Yang pulse hiding within the Yin. When Yang pulse appears both in the distal (Chun) region and the proximal (Che) region, it is a symptom of Yang insanity; when Yin pulse appears both in the distal and the proximal regions, it is a symptom of Yin insanity; a prolapse of Yang will result in blurred vision as if seeing a ghost, and a prolapse of Yin will result in blindness.

Question 21**CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE DISEASE OF THE BODY AND THE DISEASED PULSE**

The Classics stated: When the body is diseased but the pulse remains normal, it means the patient will live; but when the pulse is diseased and the body remains normal, the patient will die. What does it mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the body is diseased, but the pulse appears normal, it does not mean that the pulse is in fact normal, it only means that pulse and respiration do not correspond to each other. This is the grand method of diagnosis.

Question 22**CONCERNING THE DISTURBED DISEASES OF MERIDIANS AND THE GENERATED DISEASES OF MERIDIANS**

The Classics stated: There are disturbed diseases of meridians and there are generated diseases of meridians; why is it possible that a given meridian has two types of diseases?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the Classics stated that there are disturbed diseases of meridians, they referred to the diseases of energy; and when the Classics stated that there are generated diseases of meridians, the diseases referred to the diseases of the blood. When the vicious energy resides in the energy, it causes a disturbed disease, and when the vicious energy resides in the blood, it causes a generated disease. Energy is in charge of warming up the body, while the blood is in charge of moistening it; when the energy stops circulating, it becomes diseased first, and when the blood gets coagulated unable to moisten the body, it becomes diseased afterwards. Therefore, a disturbed disease precedes a generated one.

NAN-JING CHAPTER TWO**QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE MERIDIANS (Questions 23-29)****Question 23****CONCERNING THE LENGTH AND TRAVELLING ROUTES OF MERIDIANS**

Are we able to determine the length of the three Yin and three Yang meridians of hand and foot?

The answer may be presented as follows: The length of the three Yang meridians of hand, extending from the hand to the head, measures fifty Chuns, with a total length of three hundred Chuns. The length of the three Yin meridians of hand, extending from hand to chest, measures thirty-five Chuns, with a total length of two-hundred-ten Chuns. The length of the three Yang meridians of foot, extending from foot to the head, measures eighty Chuns, with a total length of four-hundred-eighty Chuns. The three Yin meridians of foot, extending from foot to chest, measures sixty-five Chuns, with a total length of three-hundred-ninety Chuns. The two heel meridians of Yin, extending from foot to eyes, have a total length of one-hundred-fifty Chuns, with each of them measures seventy-five Chuns. The governing meridian and the conception meridian have a total length of ninety Chuns, with each of them measures forty-five Chuns. Thus, the meridians have a total length of one-thousand-six-hundred-twenty Chuns.

There are twelve master meridians and fifteen linking meridians in the human body, but where are their beginnings and where are their endings?

The answer may be presented as follows: The meridians are passages through which energy and blood flow, through which Yin and Yang communicate with each other, and through which nutritive energy is distributed all over the body. The meridians begin (at dawn) from the middle triple burning space, enter the great Yin of hand (In), and then the bright Yang (Mao); from the bright Yang to enter the bright Yang of foot (Chen), and the great Yin (Ji); from the great Yin to enter the little Yin of hand (Wu), and the great Yang (Wei); from the great Yang to enter the great Yang of foot (Shen), and the little Yin (You); from the little Yin to enter the heart master of hand (Shu), and then the little Yang (Hai); from the little Yang to enter the little Yang of foot (Tzu), and then the decreasing Yin (Chou); from the decreasing Yin to return to enter the great Yin of hand (In period next day); like a circle without end with mutual irrigation. They meet together at the wrist (where pulse is taken) and for that reason, the regions in question (referring to the region of Lung 9, and on both sides) are the places for dealing with one hundred diseases and for determining life and death.

The Classics stated: The starting and terminating of meridian energy are determined by the state of Yin and Yang; what does it mean?

The answer may be presented as follows: Starting and terminating of meridian energy are the most crucial aspects of meridians. The regions where pulse at the wrist is taken are the places into which the energies of Yin and Yang flow like the rising tide and in the circular manner without end, which is called the starting of meridian energies. The terminating of meridian energies means that the energies in the three Yin and three Yang meridians is exhausted, and when the energies are exhausted, death will occur. The symptoms of death are like the phenomena of every living thing that is about to die.

Question 24**CONCERNING SYMPTOMS DISPLAYED BY ENERGY EXHAUSTION OF YIN MERIDIANS AND YANG MERIDIANS AND THEIR PREDICTION**

What are symptoms of the exhaustion of meridian energy of the three Yin and three Yang meridians of hand and foot, and how do we know about their future course, either good or bad?

The answer may be presented as follows: The energy exhaustion of the little Yin meridians of foot will lead to a withering of bones, because the little Yin meridians are winter meridians that travel through the deep regions of the body for warming up the bones and marrow; and when the bones and marrow are not warm, the flesh will not be attached to the bones, so that the bones and the flesh are no longer connected with each other leading to a softening and shrinking of muscles which, in turn, result in the appearance of long and withered teeth without moisture. Absence of moisture is due to the death of bones. The patient will become critical on Wo days, and will die on Ji days.

The energy exhaustion of the great Yin meridians of foot gives rise to inability of meridian energies to nourish the lips, and the lips are the roots of muscles. When the meridians fail to nourish them, the muscles will not be moist, and when the muscles are not moist, the flesh will be tight, And when the flesh is tight, the lips will turn outward which is due to the death of flesh. The patient will become critical on Chia days and die on Yee days.

The energy exhaustion of the decreasing Yin meridians of foot will give rise to contraction of tendons with shrinking of testes and tongue rolling up; the decreasing Yin meridians are liver meridians, and the liver is in tune with tendons; tendons gather around the sex organs and linked with the root of tongue. This is why when the meridians fail to nourish them, the tendons will be shrinking and tight; and when the tendons are shrinking and tight, they will affect the testes and the tongue. Hence, the tongue rolling up and the shrinking of testes are due to the death of tendons; the patient will become critical on Geng days and die on Shin days.

The energy exhaustion of the great Yin meridians of hand will give rise to a withering of skin and hair. The great Yin meridians are lungs meridians, and they supply energy to warm up the skin and hair; when the energy fails to nourish, the skin and hair will become withered; and when the skin and hair become withered, it means that fluids are gone; and when fluids are gone, both the skin and joints are harmed; when the skin and joints are harmed, the skin will be withered and the hair will break; breaking of hair is due to the death of hair. The patient will become critical on Ping days and die on Ding days.

The energy exhaustion of the little Yin meridians of hand will give rise to a blockage of meridians; when the meridians are blocked up, the blood will not flow; when the blood fails to flow, color will be gone which explains why the patient's complexion is black which is due to the death of the blood. The patient will become critical on Ren days and die on Gui days.

The energy exhaustion of three Yin meridians of hand and foot will give rise to dizziness and appearance of flying spots before the eyes, gradually leading to closed eyes; closed eyes are caused by a loss of will, and a loss of will is due to the death of will. The patient will close his eyes and die. The energy exhaustion of six Yang meridians will give rise to a separation of Yin and Yang; when Yin and Yang are separated from each other, the pores will be sedated so that excessive perspiration

will occur with drops of sweats as big as pearls that goes on and on without a stop which is due to the death of energy. If such symptoms occur in the morning, the patient will die in the evening; if the same symptoms occur in the evening, the patient will die in the morning.

Question 25

CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF TWELVE MASTER MERIDIANS

There are twelve master meridians, but there are only eleven internal organs consisting of five viscera and six bowels; what is the meridian left?

The answer may be presented as follows: The meridian in question refers to the pericardium meridian which forms a superficial-deep relationship with the triple burning space meridian, and it has name without shape. Hence, we have twelve master meridians.

Question 26

CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF FIFTEEN LINKING MERIDIANS

There are twelve master meridians, but there are fifteen linking meridians; what are those three extra linking meridians?

The answer may be presented as follows: The three extra linking meridians in question refer to the Yang linking meridian, the Yin linking meridian, and the great link of the spleen. The Yang linking meridian refers to the linking meridian of the heel meridian of Yang; the Yin linking meridian refers to the linking meridian of the heel meridian of Yin; and so, there are fifteen linking meridians.

Question 27

CONCERNING THE MEANING AND CONTENTS OF EXTRAORDINARY MERIDIANS

There are eight extraordinary meridians which are beyond the scope of the twelve master meridians; why is that ?

The answer may be presented as follows: There are the fastener meridian of Yang, the fastener meridian of Yin, the heel meridian of Yang, the heel meridian of Yin, the connective meridian, the governing meridian, and the conception meridian, the belt meridian. The eight meridians in question are beyond the scope of the twelve master meridians, and for that reason, they are called the eight extraordinary meridians.

There are twelve master meridians and there are fifteen linking meridians, with a total of twenty-seven energies which are closely connected with one another in the upper or lower regions; how do we account for the fact that the meridians in question do not fall within the scope of the twelve master meridians?

The answer may be presented as follows: When the Sage drew a geographical map and designed waterways in order to facilitate the passages of water and to prepare for emergencies in case of heavy rains, he had no choice but leaving out the extraordinary meridians so that they might accommodate the extra amount of water which might overflow from the regular channels. This explains why the extraordinary meridians are beyond the scope of the twelve master meridians in the human body.

Question 28**CONCERNING THE TRAVELLING ROUTES, STARTING AND TERMINATING POINTS OF THE EIGHT EXTRAORDINARY MERIDIANS**

The eight extraordinary meridians are beyond the scope of the twelve master meridians, but where are their starting points and where are their connecting points?

The answer may be presented as follows: The governing meridian begins at the lowest point (namely, the Conception 1 or Huiyin point, meeting of Yin); it then travels along the spinal column and upward to the Fengfu point (Governing 15, palace of wind), and it belongs to the brain.

The conception meridian begins in the region below the Chungchi point (Conception 3); it travels upward through the hair and along the abdomen upward through the Kuanyuan point (Conception 4) to reach the throat.

The connective meridian begins from the Chichung point (namely, Stomach 31), travels within the stomach meridian and upward along both sides of navel to reach the middle of chest and then disperse.

The belt meridian begins from the lowest false rib and completes one full circle around the waist like a belt.

The heel meridian of Yang begins from the heel and travels along the outer ankle to reach the Fengchih point (namely, Gall 20).

The heel meridian of Yin also begins from the heel, and travels upward along the inner ankle to the throat, where it is connected with the connective meridian.

The fastener meridian of Yang and the fastener meridian of Yin connect the body to accommodate the extra energies that are unable to flow into the master meridians; and so, the fastener meridian of Yang begins at the meeting place of various Yangs (referring to the point called Chinmen or golden door, namely, Bladder 63); the fastener meridian of Yin begins at the meeting place of various Yins (referring to the point called Chupin point, namely, Kidney 9).

The theory may be compared to the plan of a Sage in designing the map of waterways which, when full, will flow into the deep lakes; by the same token, when the energy fills up the master meridians, it will flow into the eight extraordinary meridians and stop circulating through the twelve master meridians. Hence they are outside the scope of the twelve master meridians. When the extraordinary meridians are under the attack of the vicious energy that blocks up circulation, it will give rise to swelling and hot sensations which should be treated by stone-needles.

Question 29**CONCERNING THE SYMPTOMS OF EIGHT EXTRAORDINARY MERIDIANS**

What are the symptoms of diseased extraordinary meridians?

The answer may be presented as follows: The fastener meridian of Yang connects together various Yangs while the fastener meridian of Yin connects together various Yins; when the fastener meridian of Yin and that of Yang fail to connect together, it will give rise to a loss of will power and a weakening of physical strength. When the fastener meridian of Yang alone is diseased, it will cause

shivering with cold and hot sensations; when the fastener meridian of Yin alone is diseased, it will cause heart pain.

When the heel meridian of Yin is diseased, it will cause a relaxation of Yang side and a tightening of Yin side; when the heel meridian of Yang is diseased, it will cause a relaxation of Yin side and a tightening of Yang side. When the connective meridian is diseased, it will cause upsurging energy and acute abdominal disturbances. When the governing meridian is diseased, it will cause stiffness of spine or even fainting in severe cases. When the conception meridian is diseased, it will cause abdominal disturbances and seven types of hernia in man and shaped coagulations in woman. When the belt meridian is diseased, it will cause abdominal swelling and shivering with cold as if sitting in cold water. Such are the symptoms caused by diseased extraordinary meridians.