

**A COMPLETE TRANSLATION OF YELLOW
EMPEROR'S CLASSICS OF INTERNAL MEDICINE
(NEI-JING AND NAN-JING)**

#301 Volume One [su-wen]

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BOOK EIGHT**Chapter 75: On Books of Highest Teaching****The Key Concepts in this Chapter**

A good and skillful physician should, in addition to a possession of medical knowledge, also know something about astronomy, geography, and human affairs, in order to combine them for clinical applications. This forms the subject matter of this chapter. This means that environmental factors are very important in the treatment of diseases; and also, the diseases of three Yang meridians are singled out for discussion in this chapter.

The Yellow Emperor sat in the administration hall and summoned Lei-Kong to ask him: Do you have some knowledge about medicine?

Lei-Kong replied: I have read some medical books and understood their contents in a general way, but still unable to distinguish a number of concepts; and when I became capable of distinguishing the concepts, I was still unable to understand their brightness (causes of diseases); and when I became capable of understanding their brightness, I was unable to have a deeper understanding of the theory involved. Now, I am good enough to treat the diseases of the masses, but still incapable of treating the diseases of the king and higher officials. I wish to learn the established methods of measuring the shadow of the sun (see Chapter 9 of Su Wen for detail) to be combined with the four seasons and Yin and Yang and to separate the stars, the sun, and the moon, in order to further develop the scope of medical theory and pass it on to posterity for furthering their understanding in this respect. Moreover, the theory should be improved in the light of Shennong and should be written down as a textbook for instruction in accordance with the teachings of the two ancient kings (Fu-Hsi and Shennong).*

[Henry Lu's Commentary: *The person by the name of Lei-Kong was a subject of the Yellow Emperor and had received instructions from the Yellow Emperor in Chinese medicine; he was believed to have written seven chapters of Su Wen, including Chapters 75 to 81.

However, some historians believe that Lei-Kong had, in fact, written only one chapter of Su Wen, namely, Chapter 75, On Books of Highest Teaching.]

The Yellow Emperor said: Good. Remember that what you have just said are all based upon Yin-Yang and superficial-deep relationships as well as mutual responses between the upper and the lower and also between female and male. Thus, a physician should know something about the upper region which is astronomy; he should know something about the lower region which is geography, and he should also know something about the middle region which is human affairs; and it is only with such knowledge that he will be able to make the medical theory long-lasting in order to teach it to the

masses without doubt. And so, all the medical treatises may be passed on to posterity as precious heritage.

Lei-Kong said: I wish to receive instructions in medical theory and explanations in detail so that I may be able to understand it.

The Yellow Emperor asked: Have you ever heard of a book entitled, A Treatise On Yin And Yang?

Lei-Kong replied: I have not.

The Yellow Emperor said: The third Yang (the great Yang) takes the heaven as its task (because it is the Yang of the heaven); but Yang energy moves up and down without regular patterns, and when it is combined with vicious energies (instead of fighting against them), it will cause harm to Yin and Yang (the balance of Yin and Yang).

Lei-Kong said: It is said that when the third Yang strikes, its force will be hard to resist. I wish to know what it means.

The Yellow Emperor said: When the third Yang arrives alone, it in fact means the the three Yangs arrive together; and the force will be like wind and rains which will cause diseases on top of the head (vertex) and diarrhea in the lower region. As its movements do not follow a fixed timetable externally, and internally, it does not follow a regular pattern of change, the diseases it causes will not remain consistent with the patterns of diseases that occur along the meridians, with the result that in diagnosis, the upper region and the lower region cannot be clearly distinguished.*

[Henry Lu's Commentary: *Why does the statement that the third Yang arrives alone in fact means the simultaneous arrival of the three Yangs? The answer is that the third Yang means the great Yang which is the major energy of various Yangs, so that when the third Yang arrives, the energy of other Yangs will come along also, including the little Yang and the bright Yang.]

Lei-Kong said: I have seldom treated diseases with effects; please kindly explain in detail (concerning the meaning of Yin and Yang, etc.).

The Yellow Emperor said: The third Yang is the extreme Yang, and when Yang energy is accumulated and combined, it will cause shock; and the diseases will include the symptoms of swift wind attacking at the speed of thunder, with nine orifices all blocked up, and Yang energy overflowing on the sides, and the patient will suffer from dry throat and blocked throat. And, when the Yang energy enters to mix up with Yin energy, the Yin energy will move upward and downward in an irregular manner, and the struggle will cause dysentery; if the third Yang hits the heart directly, the patient will suffer from inability to stand up from a sitting position or to lie down from a standing position, which is due to the whole body under the attack of the third Yang. Do you know how to obtain an understanding of the ultimate theory under the heaven, to distinguish between Yin and Yang, to respond to the four seasons, and to stay in tune with the five elements?

Lei-Kong said: I cannot make a distinction in regard to the theory of Yang energy, nor can I understand the principles in regard to the theory of Yin energy; please kindly instruct me, so that I will be able to apply the theory as the ultimate principles of clinical practice.

The Yellow Emperor said: If you receive some instruction without thoroughly understanding the ultimate principles involved, you will begin to cast some doubts about what you have been taught. Now, let me tell you something about the ultimate principles.

When disease attacks the five viscera, the tendons and bones will become decreased (due to inability of the five viscera to nourish them); when you say you are unable to make distinction and to understand the principles, it means that the major theory passed on to us from previous generations has gone down the drains. As an example, when the kidneys are exhausted, the patient may feel nervous, particularly at dark with fatigue and slow movements and dislike of going out or too lazy to conduct daily affairs.

Chapter 76: On the Teaching of Naturally Established Truth

The Key Concepts in this Chapter

Diagnosis should be made according to established standards with close examination of the conditions in order to come up with an accurate diagnosis of the disease. Thus, in this chapter, pulse diagnosis of the spleen, the liver, and the kidneys diseases are singled out for discussion.

The Yellow Emperor was relaxing and summoned Lei-Kong to ask him: You have read medical books, studied medical theories, thumbed through other publications, detected the differences among them, combined their theories; so, tell me something about your specialization. Let me remind you that the five viscera and the six bowels, the gall bladder, the stomach, the large and small intestines, the spleen, the womb, the bladder, the brain and the marrow, nasal discharge, mouth water, crying in tears, sadness, which are the routes of water; all such things are the indispensable parts of human life in regard to which errors are easily committed, and for this reason, you should continue to study until you have developed a perfect understanding of them; otherwise, your ignorance in this respect will cause disaster to the human race.

Lei-Kong said: When I read the Classic of Pulse Diagnosis (a Chinese classic published in ancient China to be distinguished from the book under the same title published subsequently), volume one and volume two, the contents are tremendous indeed. I have been unable to make clear distinctions between different concepts, let alone to thoroughly understand the brightness of the contents.

The Yellow Emperor said: You have already understood the faults (diseases) of the five viscera, the disharmony of the six bowels, the failure of needles and stones (acupuncture), the proper effects of toxic herbs, the flavours of soups and fluids; and you have already described such things in great detail with complete answers. Now, you should ask me something you do not understand.

Lei-Kong said: Liver deficiency, kidneys deficiency, and spleen deficiency, all give rise to the symptoms of heavy sensations in the body and depression which may be effectively or unsuccessfully treated by toxic herbs, acupuncture and moxibustion, with stone-needles or soups and fluids. I wish to understand the reason behind it.

The Yellow Emperor said: You are too old to ask those immaterial questions, but they could have been caused by my previous remarks. I have asked you something invisible, but you have replied by reference to volume one and volume two, why? When the pulse of the spleen appears hollow and

superficial like that of the lungs, and the pulse of the kidneys appears small and superficial like that of the spleen, and the pulse of the liver appears acute and deep and dispersing like that of the kidneys; they are the pulses easily confused by physicians but they may be distinguished through an understanding of the naturally established truth.*

[Henry Lu's Commentary: *The pulses listed in this paragraph are abnormal pulses, and the following are considered normal pulses of the organs involved: the pulse of the spleen should be superficial and relaxed; the pulse of the lungs should be superficial and short; the pulse of the heart should be small and superficial and sliding; the pulse of the liver should be acute, tight, and dispersing; the pulse of the kidneys should be striking, deep and sliding.]

The three viscera which correspond to earth, wood, and water respectively are very close to one another which even a child can understand, and there is really no need to raise questions concerning them. Lei-Kong said: Some people suffer from headache, spasms of tendons, heaviness of bones, feeling nervous with scanty energy, hiccups, belching, abdominal fullness, in constant shock with dislike of lying down; what organ causes such symptoms? And, the pulse appears superficial and wiry, and upon pressure, it appears stony and hard which I do not quite understand. How to compare the similarities among the three viscera?

The Yellow Emperor said: According to the naturally established truth, the diseases of elderly patients should be traced back to the bowels, the diseases of younger patients should be traced back to the meridians, the diseases of the middle-aged patients should be traced back to the viscera.*

[Henry Lu's Commentary: *The elderly patients are fond of thick flavours which are harmful to the bowels; the younger patients are fond of working hard which is harmful to the meridians; the middle-aged (including the so-called strong patients) patients are fond of excessive sex which is harmful to the viscera, particularly the kidneys.]

Your remarks have ignored the fact that the eight winds and inhibited heat are external causes and the five viscera invaded by the energy of heat is an internal cause, and the external and internal causes will affect each other in the process. A pulse that appears superficial and wiry points to a deficiency of the kidneys; a pulse that appears deep and stony points to an internal stagnation of the energy of kidneys; a patient suffering from feeling nervous with scanty energy is due to a blockage in the waterway (because of the deficiency of the kidneys) that makes the energy disappear and wither away. Cough and depression are due to the upsurging movements of the energy of kidneys (to attack the heart and the lungs). The energy of a person as listed above is diseased by one single organ (which is the kidneys). When you mentioned the simultaneous attack of three viscera, you are off the track as far as diagnosis is concerned.

Lei-Kong said: Some people suffer from a weakening of four limbs, panting and cough, loss of blood, which I have diagnosed as a disease of the lungs, and the patient's pulse appears superficial and big and tight on pressure which I dare not treat. However, some physicians of lower class applied stone-needles to treat the patient with excellent results, and the treatment was done by bloodletting; and when bleeding stopped, the patient felt light in the body; how do you account for that?

The Yellow Emperor said: The diseases you can treat can also be treated by many ordinary physicians; but your diagnosis of the disease of the lungs is incorrect. As to the physicians of lower class who treated the patients with excellent results, it may be regarded as accidental not unlike a swan that may fly way up in the sky by accident. When a sage treats disease, he will follow the established standards, refer to clinical cases for comparing the similarities, observe the transformation of something invisible (pulse), and examine the upper and lower regions, without being bound by any rigid and inflexible type of doctrine. Now, when the pulse appears superficial and big and hollow, it is an indication of the energy of the spleen becoming exhausted externally so that its energy departs from the stomach to enter into the bright Yang meridian. As the two fires (minister fire and monarch fire) cannot win a victory over the three waters (referring to three Yin viscera, namely, spleen, liver, kidneys), it gives rise to a chaotic and irregular pulse. A weakening of four limbs is caused by a stoppage of the pure energy of the spleen; panting and cough are caused by an invasion of water into the bright Yang (namely, the energy of the kidneys upsurges to enter into the stomach); bleeding is caused by the acute conditions of blood vessels that disturb the normal flow of blood streams. If the symptoms are diagnosed as a disease of the lungs, it is like a crazy error; if the similarities between diseases are not considered and analyzed it cannot be considered as a bright diagnosis.

When the lungs are harmed (diseased), the energy of the spleen can fail to sustain itself which will affect the energy conditions of the stomach; and when the energy conditions of the stomach are affected, the energy of meridians will not obey the order; the true energies of the organs (spleen and kidneys) will become disintegrated (involving earth of spleen and water of kidneys), with an exhaustion of the meridians; and the five viscera will suffer from an excretion of their energies (because the lungs are the head of five viscera), with either nosebleed or vomiting of blood; such symptoms are caused by the disease of lungs to be distinguished from the disease of the spleen, and they are different from each other, as the shapeless heaven is different from the earth without stripes, and as black is different from white, which is a great difference indeed.

This was my fault, however, because I assumed that you already knew about it and did not tell you. You should study the classics called Comparison of Similarities and Naturally Established Truth (both are ancient Chinese classics), as both of them are known as the classics of diagnosis, which will make you understand the ultimate principles of medicine.

Chapter 77: On Five Kinds of Careless Faulty Diagnosis

The Key Concepts in this Chapter

This chapter points out that there are five faulty types of diagnosis committed by physicians which could lead to serious consequences; in addition, it is also pointed out that in making diagnosis, one should not be confined to the four established methods, namely, observations, questioning, taking pulse, and smelling, because there are other factors which should be taken into consideration, and they may include change in climate, the normal physical conditions of the patient, and his living environments, etc.

The Yellow Emperor said: The ultimate Tao is so distant from us that it is as deep as looking down at an abyss and as far off as greeting the floating clouds; the depth of the abyss can be measured, but in greeting the floating clouds, one is unable to know their edges. The healing arts of the Sages serve as the standards of ten thousand people; in making observations about the patient's will and sentiments, it is necessary to follow the established principles; in making diagnosis, it is necessary to follow the medical classics and the principles they contain, so that one will be able to relieve the sufferings of ten thousand people. Therefore, there are five kinds of careless diagnosis and four virtues; are you aware of them?

Lei-Kong left his seat and bowed his head again: I am still immature intellectually and I am so ignorant that I have never heard of the five kinds of careless faulty diagnosis and the four virtues (of the four seasons) as well as similarities in names and manifestations of diseases, because I have never tried to learn such things from medical classics. For this reason, I am unable to answer the question put forward by your Majesty.

The Yellow Emperor said: While making diagnosis, the physician should ask the patient as to whether he used to be a member of the nobility but now is a member of the humility (a commoner), because if this is the case, the patient may not be under the attack of vicious energies, but his disease could have been caused by internal factors (the five emotions) and it is called prolapse of nutritive energy. If the patient used to be rich but becomes poor now, it is called a loss of pure energy, with the energies of five viscera staying put that causes disease as time goes on. Under such circumstances, diagnosis should not be focussed on the viscera and bowels and external manifestations of physical shapes; a physician may cast some doubts about his diagnosis and unable to know the name of disease, but the patient may continue to lose weight with a deficiency of energy and lack of pure energy, and the disease will become deeper and deeper day by day leading to an absence of energy with shiverings with cold and in shock. If the disease is deep, defence energy may be wasted externally, and nutritive energy may be deprived of internally. When a physician neglects to take into consideration the internal factors of disease, he will not be able to identify the conditions of the disease which is called the first kind of careless faulty diagnosis.

In making diagnosis of disease, it is necessary to ask the patient concerning his eating habits and place of residence, whether he has been suffering from extreme joy or extreme misery, whether he used to be happy but now becomes miserable, which are harmful to his pure energy. If this is the case, then, exhaustion will occur deep down inside and the physical shape will appear downcast. Extreme (acute) anger (frenzy) is harmful to the Yin and acute joy is harmful to the Yang (with Yin referring to the lower half of the body and Yang referring to the upper half). When the upsurging energy moves upward, it will fill up the meridians and change the physical shape. When an ignorant physician gives treatment without a knowledge of the principles underlying tonification and sedation or the conditions of illness, the glorious energy of the patient will become in decline with an increased attack of vicious energies which is the second kind of careless faulty diagnosis.

A physician good at taking the pulse will make use of comparison of similarities, abnormal physical phenomena (such as pulse and complexion and spirits, etc.) and naturally established principles; a physician without such knowledge is ignorant of the principles of diagnosis and thus, he is not

qualified to be regarded as a member of the nobility, which is called the third kind of careless faulty diagnosis.

There are three states of physical conditions to be taken into consideration in making diagnosis (namely, the state of pure energy, the state of energy conditions, and the state of spirits). The physician should ask the patient in regard to his nobility and humility; whether he used to be a king or a higher official of the government but failed miserably, or whether he has a very strong desire to become a king or a higher official of the government. When a person has his power taken away from him after losing his nobility status, he may not be under the attack of vicious energies, but his pure energy and spirits will be harmed internally which will cause the disease in the body. When a person used to be rich but becomes poor later, he may not be under the attack of vicious energies, but his skin will be withered and tendons bent, and his legs will be weakened. If a physician fails to make thorough observations, to mobilize the patient's spirits leading to external weaknesses, the three states of physical conditions will become disordered and the disease will remain unchanged, and treatment will not take effect, which is called the fourth kind of careless faulty diagnosis.

In making diagnosis, it is necessary to know everything from A to Z (see Chapter 9 of Ling Shu), to understand the developmental sequences of disease, to take the pulse, to question the patient concerning the symptoms, and to treat male patients and female patients accordingly.*

[Henry Lu's Commentary: *This paragraph is subject to different interpretations and the one presented is focused upon the diagnosis aspect which seems more consistent with the context of this chapter; however, some interpreters have made their interpretations with emphasis on treatment aspect, and the following is a case in point: The developmental sequences of disease is interpreted as the sequences of administering acupuncture and moxibustion; to treat male patients and female patients accordingly means they should be treated in separate rooms.]

If the patient has been separated from his relatives for long and has become worried as a result, then, the emotions of worry, fear, joy, anger may undergo irregular changes which could cause an empty deficiency of the five viscera with the blood and the energy departing from their respective guarding positions; a physician cannot be regarded as a good one unless he can detect such things in his diagnosis.

If the patient has suffered injuries previously which have separated his tendons and meridians, he may have regained his body strength after recovery; however, under such circumstances, the body fluids may still fail to circulate as normal, so that the old injuries have, in fact, not fully recovered with coagulations of energy and blood in the yang meridians which may have become pustulated to cause cold sensations alternating with hot sensations. A physician of lower class may try to treat the patient by needling Yin and Yang hastily which could cause a total collapse of the whole body (because sweet herbs should be used instead) with twitching of tendons in the four limbs, with the result that the patient will die in due course. A physician who fails to understand the causes of disease and to question the patient as to how the disease has originally come about and who insists that the disease is incurable under the circumstances is wantonly careless, which is called the fifth kind of careless faulty diagnosis.

The above five kinds of careless faulty diagnosis are committed by the physicians who have failed to acquire professional skills and to obtain a proper understanding of human affairs.

Therefore, it is said: The method of treatment as administered by a Sage is such that one should know about the Yin and Yang of the heaven and the earth, about the constant patterns and special functions of the four seasons, about the five viscera and the six bowels, about deep-superficial relationships between the three Yins and the three Yangs. The physician should make it a point to acquire the knowledge about acupuncture and moxibustion and stone-needles, about the effects of toxic herbs, about the naturally established truth, about human affairs, about the established principles. The physician should know about the patient's nobility and humility status, about his financial status (rich or poor), and about the special physical make-up of the patient. In addition, the patient's age and his emotions of courage and cowardice, his meridian zones, the original-causes of disease, the righteous energies of the eight winds, and the pulse in three regions for diagnosis of nine symptoms should all of them be taken into consideration before diagnosis is completed.

The way of treating disease should be focussed upon the detection of internal energy as the precious clue to the cause of disease; and it is only after the internal energy has faded to offer any clue that one should look for the cause of disease through an examination of the superficial and deep regions of the body. When a physician can administer treatment according to the quantity of energy and blood and the standard depth of insertion and practice it accordingly, he will never commit any malpractice.

Without an adequate knowledge of the functions of acupuncture points, acupuncture treatment could cause an accumulation of heat in the five viscera and occurrence of carbuncles in the six bowels. To make diagnosis without proper examination is called absence of regular diagnosis; to follow the established method of diagnosis is to share the brightness of the classics. The Upper Classic and the Lower Classic contain such chapters as Determination of Yin and Yang (namely, the depth of disease), Strange Diseases, and manifestations of Five Viscera, which should be studied thoroughly; in addition, the colors of the bright hall region (nose) should be examined thoroughly; and then, the physician can practice medicine all the way.

Chapter 78: On Committing Four Faults

The Key Concepts in this Chapter

This chapter outlines four kinds of inattentiveness on the part of physician: first, making diagnosis without concentration; second, application of stone needles without adequate knowledge; third, hasty diagnosis; fourth, abuse of pulse diagnosis.

The Yellow Emperor was sitting in the administrative hall with Lei-Kong sitting on the side. The Yellow Emperor said: You have read quite a few books and have acquired a large number of medical skills. Try to tell me your successes and failures in administrating treatment and why they succeeded and why they failed.

Lei-Kong replied: I have read the classics and received instructions from teachers, and I am under the impression that a complete diagnosis can be made. But occasionally the treatment will fail in actual clinical practice; could your Majesty please explain as to why this happens?

The Yellow Emperor replied: You are still young and your knowledge is still immature; and on top of that, you have failed to focus your concentration on one thing. It is common knowledge that there are twelve master meridians, and there are three hundred sixty five reticular meridians in the human body; and they have been made use of by physicians. The reason that a physician fails to make a complete diagnosis is due to absence of mental concentration and irregular state of his will and sentiments which causes inconsistency between the internal and the external and brings about the state of doubt. To make diagnosis without an adequate knowledge of Yin and Yang as well as upstream and downstream movements is the first fault on the part of physician (due to inattentiveness). To quit in the middle of receiving instructions from teachers, to learn medical skills from phony schools of thought, to advertise one's medical skills falsely, to apply stone-needles indiscriminately, to cause suffering to the patient unnecessarily, is to commit the second fault in treatment. Failure to take into consideration the patient's financial status, namely, rich or poor, his status of nobility and humility, his physical make-up, namely, fat or skinny, cold and warmth of his body, his appetite and preferences, his courage and cowardice, and failure to make comparison of similarities which can cause confusion in the mind of the physician without a clear awareness, are the third fault on the part of physician. To make diagnosis without asking the patient as to how the disease originally started, whether he has any worry or irregular habits of eating, whether he has any excessive habits of living, whether he has suffered from toxic effects, and to rely solely on hasty pulse diagnosis at the wrist to come up with a name of disease on such shaky grounds which could easily cause harm to the patient are the fourth fault on the part of physician.

A physician may become known to people living as far as one thousand miles by word of mouth, but he cannot be called a good physician unless he knows thoroughly about pulse diagnosis and human affairs; the way of treatment consists in the precious heritage of naturally established truth. It is not wise to stick to pulse diagnosis at the wrist without an adequate knowledge of the pulse of the five viscera; and when one hundred diseases begin to attack, the physician may blame himself or he may blame his teacher for his failure to instruct him in medical knowledge, but the most important thing is to administer treatment according to the established principles. A physician who fails to administer treatment according to the established principles and foregoes the legitimate medical skills may treat his patients with effects by accident, but it is quite foolish for him to be content with his accidental success.

Alas. Medicine is so subtle that no one seems able to know about its complete secrets. The way of medicine is so wide that its scope is as immeasurable as the heaven and the earth, and its depth is as immeasurable as the four seas. Unless you learn by heart, it is likely that you will remain in the dark about the bright theory of medicine.

Chapter 79: On Natural Groupings of Yin and Yang

The Key Concepts in this Chapter

This chapter presents a detailed discussion on the physiological functions of the three Yins and the three Yangs in relation to meridians; in the meantime, the symptoms and pulses arising from change in the meridians are also analyzed in great detail.

On the day of Beginning of Spring, the Yellow Emperor was sitting quietly, observing the colors at the distant edges of the eight directions, measuring the energies of the eight winds, and His Majesty asked Lei-Kong: The five viscera are in charge of the groupings of Yin and Yang as well as the circulations of meridians, what particular viscus is the most precious?

Lei-Kong replied: The spring corresponds to Chia and Yee, its color is azure, its internal organ is the liver, its reign consists of seventy-two days during which period the liver meridian is in charge. I believe the liver is the most precious viscus.

The Yellow Emperor said: You should refer once again to the Chapters of Yin-Yang and Naturally Established Truth in the Upper Classic and the Lower Classic in which what you have regarded as the most precious viscus is referred to as the least precious one.

After a fast of seven days, Lei-Kong once again sat in the morning to keep company. The Yellow Emperor said: The third Yang (the great Yang meridian of foot) is vertical, the second Yang is fastening, and the first Yang is the roaming region. The beginning and ending of the five viscera may be understood by reference to the different regions of the three Yangs. The third Yin (not third Yang which is an error in the Chinese text) is superficial, and the second Yin is deep, and the first Yin is extreme exhaustion of Yin energy symbolic of the first day and the last day of the moon. The alternating growth and decline of Yin and Yang are consistent with the circulations of the meridians.

Lei-Kong said: I am too immature to understand it.

The Yellow Emperor said: The so-called third Yang refers to the great Yang which is a vertical meridian. When the energy of the third Yang meridian reaches the great Yin of hand (the lungs meridian at the wrist, referring to the Taiyuan point, {LU-9 tai yuan}), and if the pulse appears wiry, superficial and not deep (which points to a disease, as the pulse of the great Yang, while normal, should appear big and long), then, it is necessary to consider the seasonal energy involved, to examine the conditions of the heart (namely, the spirits) in consultation with the theory contained in the chapter entitled, Yin and Yang, in order to determine the nature of disease.

The so-called second Yang refers to the bright Yang; and when the energy of the bright Yang meridian reaches the great Yin of hand, and if the pulse appears wiry and deep and acute with drumming, it is a dead symptom in case the heat strikes (because heat can consume and exhaust energy easily).

The so-called first Yang refers to the little Yang; when the energy of the little Yang reaches the great Yin of hand involving the Jenying point (ST-9, ren ying) in the upper region, and if the pulse appears wiry and acute and suspending but not exhausting, it points to the disease of the little Yang; if the Yin pulse appears all by itself without Yang energy, it is a dead symptom.

The third Yin is the master of the six meridians, and when its energy reaches the wrist to meet with the energies of other meridians, and if the pulse appears hidden and drumming but not superficial, it points to the upper emptiness of the will and the heart.

The second Yin (kidneys) reaches the lungs with its energy returning to the bladder, and it is connected with the spleen and the stomach externally. When the first Yin arrives all by itself, it is an indication of an exhaustion of meridian energy and a floating of the energy, and the pulse will not appear drumming, but rather, it will appear hooky and sliding.

At times, the six meridians may display a Yin pulse, and at others, it may display a Yang pulse; they may be combined with each other, in communication with the five viscera, and in tune with the patterns of Yin and Yang. The pulse that arrives first is a host pulse; and the pulse that arrives later is a guest pulse.

Lei-Kong said: I have tried with great sincerity to learn the theory of meridians, and I have read the theory outlined in the chapter entitled, Naturally Established Truth, in order to learn the principles of naturally established truth; but I still fail to understand Yin and Yang, male and female.

The Yellow Emperor said: The third Yang is father, the second Yang is defence energy, and the first Yang is a regulator. The third Yin is mother, the second Yin is female, and the first Yin is the sole servant.

When the second Yang (stomach-earth) and the first Yin (liver-wood) are engaged in a struggle with each other, the bright Yang will suffer primarily (because of wood subduing Earth); the bright Yang is unable to win a victory over the first Yin, with the result that the energy of the stomach will be softened and the energy of wood will be in motion, leading to a stagnation and blockage of all the nine orifices.

When the third Yang (the great Yang of foot, namely, the bladder) and the first Yin are engaged in a struggle with each other, the great Yang meridian will win a victory (because the bladder which is water generates wood which is liver); the first Yin is unable to stop the water, with the result that the five viscera will become disordered internally, and externally, there will be shock and nervousness.

When the second Yin (heart) and the second Yang (stomach) are engaged in a struggle with each other, the disease will attack the lungs; the pulse of the little Yin (heart) will appear deep (at the Shenmen point, {HT-7, shen men}), with the result that the lungs will be subdued and the spleen will be harmed, and externally, the four limbs will be harmed also.

When the second Yin and the second Yang are meeting together to struggle with each other, the kidneys will be diseased (due to the victory of fire that causes dryness of the earth which is the bright Yang, so that fire and dryness combine forces to attack the water which is kidneys), that causes swearing and wild behaviour in insanity (due to upsurging fire and subdued Yin).

When the second Yin and the first Yang are engaged in a struggle with each other, the vicious energy will be derived from the kidneys (due to the inability of the first Yang which is the triple burning space to win a victory over the kidneys); the Yin energy of the kidneys will loiter around the heart and stomach region, with a blockage of the orifices below the stomach region as if being surrounded by a dyke, and the four limbs will become weak and softened.

When the pulse of the first Yin and that of the first Yang slow down and come to a stop, it points to the Yin energy reaching the heart (due to the inability of the liver and the gall bladder to start the fire of the heart); and the vicious energy may move up and down without regular patterns (because a disorder of the liver and the gall bladder will generate wind which moves around constantly), or it may move outward and inward without being spoked; the patient will suffer from dry throat and the disease of the spleen which is earth (due to wood subduing earth which is spleen).

When the second Yang, the third Yin, and the extreme Yin (spleen) are all diseased, the Yin energy will be unable to pass through the Yang territory, and the Yang energy will be unable to reside in the Yin territory, with the result that Yin and Yang will be exhausted simultaneously. If the pulse appears

superficial, it indicates blood coagulations in the bowels (due to the disease of spleen); if the pulse appears deep, it indicates accumulations of rotten pus (due to the disease of the stomach). If both Yin and Yang remain strong, the disease will reach the Yang organs (sex organs) in man and Yin organs (sex organs) in woman, which means that the upper region which is clearly visible and the lower region which remains in the dark will both be under attack; and the time of death may be predicted on the basis of the celestial stems and the terrestrial branches (such as Chia-In indicating January and Yee-Mao indicating February, etc.).

Lei-Kong asked: How do you account for death that occurs in a short period of time?

The Yellow Emperor did not reply, and Lei-Kong repeated his question.

The Yellow Emperor said: It is stated in the classics.

Lei-Kong asked: How do you account for death that occurs in a short period of time?

The Yellow Emperor replied: If a disease attacks during the three months of winter and causes Yang excess, the patient will live through January in spring; but if the dead pulse appears in spring, the patient will die in early summer (due to the fact that Yang energy begins to grow in spring which is bad for Yang excess).

If a disease attacks during the three months of winter with an internal exhaustion of Yang energy, the patient will die as soon as grasses and leaves of willow trees begin to grow; and the patient will die in January if the spring displays an exhaustion of both Yin and Yang.

The disease that attacks during the three months of spring is called killing of Yang; and when both Yin and Yang are exhausted, the patient will die when grasses become dried. If a disease attacks during the three months of summer with an exhaustion of the extreme Yin (namely, Yin energy of spleen exhausted which refers to the hot disease of the spleen), the patient will die within ten days (because the maturity number of the spleen is 10); if a meeting of Yin and Yang still takes place (namely, Yin pulse mixed with Yang pulse which points to the presence of Yin energy), then the patient will die when running water becomes clear (namely, in autumn).

If a disease attacks during the three months of autumn affecting the three Yangs simultaneously, the patient will recover without treatment (because Yin energy begins to grow in autumn); if Yin and Yang become diseased alternately, then the patient will not be able to sit down from the standing position (when Yang is victorious), and he will not be able to stand up from a sitting position (when Yin is victorious). If the third Yang arrives all by itself (without Yin energy), the patient will die when water begins to freeze (due to isolation of Yang energy in winter); if the second Yin arrives all by itself, the patient will die when there is plenty of water (in January when there are lots of rains).

Chapter 80: On Thriving and Declining of Energies

The Key Concepts in this Chapter

This chapter discusses the principles underlying the thriving and declining of Yin and Yang; it compares Yin and Yang of the human body to the heaven and the earth and the four seasons. In addition, this chapter also interprets dreams according to the five elements.

Lei-Kong respectfully asked: Energy may be plenty or scanty, and what is upstream and what is downstream?

The Yellow Emperor replied: When Yang energy flows from left to right, it is called downstream; when Yin energy flows from right to left, it is called downstream; when energy flows from upper to lower in elderly persons, it is called downstream; when energy flows from lower to upper in younger persons, it is called downstream. Therefore, when the energy of spring and summer follows Yang energy (namely, to flow from left to right), it is life energy; when the energy of spring and summer follows Yin energy to return to autumn and winter, it is dead energy; conversely, when the energy of autumn and winter follows Yin energy (namely, to flow from right to left), it is life energy. Hence, energy may be plenty or scanty, but it is an upsurging energy when it flows upstream.

Lei-Kong asked: Do all excess energies become upsurging energies?

The Yellow Emperor replied: When the energy flows upward all the way without going down, cold upsurging energy will reach the knees; if this happens to a younger person, he will die in autumn or winter; if this happens to an elderly person, he will survive. If the energy flows upward without going down, it will cause headache and disease of vertex; and in making diagnosis, the symptoms do not look like a Yin disease nor a Yang disease, and the five viscera also offer no clue as to what disease it is due to their isolation; the patient feels as if living on the wild plains, as if hiding in an empty room, symptoms dragging on and on as if unable to live out the natural life span.

Thus, the patient will have wild dreams when the little Yin upsurges, and he will be in a coma in severe cases. When the third Yang is exhausted and the third Yin is disappearing, scanty energy will come about.

Therefore, when the energy of lungs is in deficiency, the patient will dream about white objects (because lungs correspond to white) or about bloody killing (because the lungs correspond to autumn which is the energy of killing). When the lungs are in the reign, the patient will dream about war.

When the energy of kidneys is in deficiency, the patient will dream about boats or drowning. When water is in the reign, the patient will dream about hiding under water as if in fear.

When the energy of liver is in deficiency, the patient will dream about aromatic mushroom or fresh grasses. When wood is in the reign, the patient will dream about hiding under trees with no courage to come out.

When the energy of heart is in deficiency, the patient will dream about fighting fires or seeing Yang objects (such as dragon or thunder). When fire is in the reign, the patient will dream about big burning fires.

When the energy of spleen is in deficiency, the patient will dream about insufficient eating. When earth is in the reign, the patient will dream about building walls and houses.

The above are related to the energy deficiency of the five viscera, namely, excess of Yang energy and deficiency of Yin energy; treatment should be consistent with the five methods of diagnosis, regulation of Yin and Yang, as well as the excess and deficiency of meridians.

There are ten measurements in diagnosis: measurement of the human body; measurement of meridians; measurement of internal organs; measurement of flesh; measurement of tendons; measurement of posterior points (with a total of five measurements on each side). After the Yin energy

and the Yang energy have been thoroughly determined, the disease will become completely diagnosed. However, the pulse may appear irregular, Yin pulse may appear like Yang pulse, and so, the method of diagnosis may not always be the same. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the upper and the lower regions, to distinguish between commoners and the members of nobility and kings. Malpractice will result from failure to learn from teachers thoroughly, to brighten one's skills, and to examine the upstream and downstream energies. Consequently, a physician of this sort may sustain female and ignore male, forgo Yin and favor Yang, ignoring the basic principle that they should remain in tune with each other; small wonder that he will fail to come up with a bright diagnosis and his errors will reveal themselves when his theory is passed on to posterity.

When the extreme Yin (earth) is in deficiency, the energy of the heaven will be exhausted; when the extreme Yang (heaven) is in abundance, the energy of the earth will be in deficiency. A meeting of Yin and Yang can only be achieved by the ultimate man; and during such a meeting, the energy of Yang should arrive first, and the energy of Yin should arrive later.

Therefore, the methods of diagnosis as employed by the Sages are such that the temporal sequences of Yin and Yang remain constant, and there are sixty methods of diagnosis that may be applied as outlined in a chapter entitled, Strange Diseases. The subtle aspects of disease should be diagnosed properly, changes in Yin and Yang should be sought, the conditions of five viscera should be grasped clearly. Among the theory presented, the principles underlying deficiency and excess are most essential in determination of the five measurements. It is only when all such aspects of diagnosis are understood that one can claim that he can make diagnosis. If one is capable of taking the Yin pulse, but unable to take the Yang pulse, his diagnosis is doomed; if one is capable of taking the Yang pulse, but unable to take the Yin pulse, his knowledge is very fragmentary indeed. To know the left without knowing the right, to know the right without knowing the left, to know the upper region without knowing the lower region, to know the energy that comes first without knowing the energy that comes later, is to produce nothing but temporary results in treatment. In order to make the method of diagnosis a perfect practice for passing to posterity forever, it is necessary to know the ugly as well as the good, to know disease as well as absence of disease, to know the upper region as well as the lower region, to know sitting positions as well as standing positions, to know doing as well as stopping, and to apply such knowledge accordingly.

The physician may infer from the excess in one region of the body to the deficiency in another region (or excess of vicious energy to deficiency of righteous energy), he may examine the upper region and the lower region in order to fully understand the workings of pulses. When the physical shape of a patient appears weak with a deficiency of energy, the patient will die; when the physical energy of a patient appears in excess with a deficiency in the energy of pulse, the patient will die; when the energy of pulse appears in excess with a deficiency in the physical energy, the patient will live.

Therefore, there are grand methods of diagnosis. The physician himself should form a regular habit of living and work hard to brighten his spiritual brightness. In making diagnosis the physician should maintain a clear awareness, examine the upper and the lower regions, estimate the energies of the eight seasonal occasions, differentiate the locations of the five viscera, take the pulse, touch the patient's skin along the ulna to see if it is sliding or retarded or cold or warm, observe his bowel movements and

urination, to be combined with other symptoms, so that the upstream and downstream flows of energy streams may be understood and the name of disease may be determined. Consequently, diagnosis may be completed that remains consistent with the established patterns of human affairs. Therefore while making diagnosis, it is necessary to observe the patient's breathing and complexion, to make use of established principles, and to apply the bright theory of Tao with clarity so that treatment will produce long-lasting results. To remain ignorant of such theory is to abandon the classics and medical principles, and the treatment will become merely hearsay which is called loss of Tao.

Chapter 81: On Subtle Topic

The Key Concepts in this Chapter

This chapter explains how tears are produced in crying, and the chapter is entitled, On Subtle Topic, due to the fact that the theory involved is rather subtle.

The Yellow Emperor was sitting in the Administration Hall; Lei-Kong asked respectfully: I have received instructions and learned from the classics; and there are chapters entitled, Naturally Established Truth, Method of Physical Shapes, Yin and Yang, which contain theories of acupuncture, moxibustion, and herbal theory. Some people are very capable of applying the theories, while others are unable to do so; and besides, the theories may not be perfect in actual practice.

As to the topics discussed in ancient times, they include sadness, joy, and anger (which are human emotions), dryness, dampness, cold, and summer heat (which are energies of the heaven), and also Yin and Yang as well as women (menstruation); I wish to ask Your Majesty concerning such topics. The status of humility, wealth, and nobility will affect the physical shape of a person, and I wish to learn something concerning applications of the theory in dealing with human affairs. And, I wish to learn something that is not contained in the classics.

The Yellow Emperor said: That is indeed a tremendous theory.

Lei-Kong asked: Sometimes, there are no tears when a person cries; and when there are tears, there is scanty nasal discharge; how does this happen?

The Yellow Emperor replied: The theory is in the classics.

Lei-Kong asked again in regard to the causes of tears and nasal discharge.

The Yellow Emperor replied: Your question will not do you any good in treatment. A skilful physician should inquire further concerning the more fundamental principles involved. The heart is the purest organ among the five viscera, and the eyes are its orifices; and the glorious complexion is its honor. Thus, when a person is virtuous, it will be manifest in his eyes by way of a harmony of energy; and when a person is discontent or worried, it will be manifest in his complexion.

Therefore, when a person feels sad, the tears will come from his eyes, and they are generated by water; the source of water is derived from an accumulation of water, and the accumulation of water is located in the extreme Yin, the extreme Yin is the pure energy of the kidneys. The reason that the water contained in the original pure energy fails to flow out is due to the fact that the pure energy holds it and protects it and wraps it up. This is why the water stays put without flowing. The pure energy of water is will; the pure energy of fire is spirit; and when water and fire act upon each other, both the

spirit and the will become sad, so that the water of the eyes is generated. Hence, there is a proverb:

Sadness of the heart is called sadness of the will. The will and the pure energy of the heart rush together to the eyes.

When the spirit and the will are both sad, the energy of the spirit will transmit it to the heart and the pure energy will travel upward along with it without flowing downward to the will, with the result that the will alone will be sad that causes tears to come out (because of the inability of the pure energy of the kidneys to hold and protect and wrap up the water due to lack of pure energy). Nasal discharge belongs to the brain, and the brain belongs to Yin. The marrow fills up the bone cavities, and nasal discharge will come about when the fluids of the brain begin to flow downward (because the brain is in communication with the nose).

The will (which belongs to the kidneys) is the master of bones, and the reason that nasal discharge follows running water (tears) is due to the fact that they travel as two substances of the same class. Nasal discharge and tears are like brothers of the human race; they will die together when conditions become critical, but they will live together when are well. When the will and the spirit are both sad, nasal discharge and tears will come out and run wild. The reason that nasal discharge and tears are both coming out and following each other is due to the fact that they belong to the same class.

Lei-Kong said: This is indeed a very outstanding theory. May I ask why some people cry without tears in their eyes, and nasal discharge does not follow the tears when the latter are scanty?

The Yellow Emperor replied: If there are no tears, it means that it is not a sad cry; absence of tears means the spirit is not benevolent; and when the spirit is not benevolent the will does not become sad, with the result that Yin and Yang are holding each other (with Yin referring to pure energy of water which is will, and Yang referring to pure energy of fire which is spirit); how can tears come out alone? When the will is sad, it will cause internal heat which will move upward to hit the Yin (which is the brain); and when it hits the Yin, it is departing from the eyes; after the will has departed, the spirit becomes incapable of guarding its pure energy with the result that both the pure energy and the spirit are departing from the eyes which causes nasal discharge and tears to come out. Have you not read and recited the classics? According to the classics, upsurging energy will cause blindness. Upsurging energy will cause Yang energy to rush upward and Yin energy to rush downward; when Yang energy rushes upward, the energy of fire will shine all by itself; when Yin energy rushes downward, cold sensations in the foot will occur which causes swelling. One water cannot win a victory over five fires (namely, Yang energies of five viscera), and as a result, one may become blind. Therefore, when the eyes are under the attack of wind, tears will come out without a stop; when the wind attacks the eyes, it will cause Yang energy to guard pure energy internally, and the energy of fire (which is Yang energy) will heat up the eyes, which accounts for the fact that tears will come out when the wind is present (due to a meeting of wind and heat). By analogy, when big fire gives rise to wind, rains will fall, which accounts for tears and nasal discharge quite well.