The book cover features a vertical composition. The top half is a dark blue night sky filled with numerous small white stars. The bottom half is a blue textured surface, possibly representing water or a specific material, with a golden needle-like object protruding from the center. A horizontal band of sunset colors (orange, red, yellow) separates the sky and the textured surface. A dark, curved shape, resembling a page being turned, is visible on the right side, overlapping the sunset and sky.

# Miraculous Way of Needles

*Reading*

*Ling Shu - Nine Needles and Twelve Yuan-Source Points*

*Written by:*

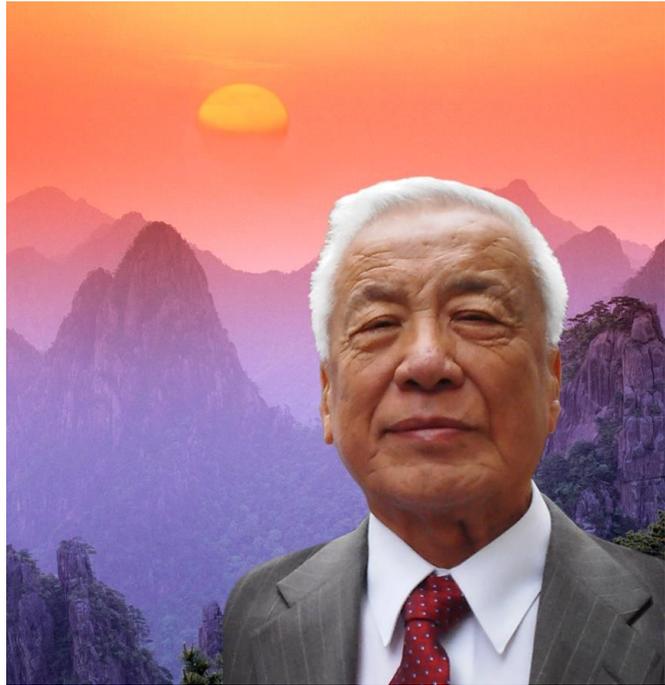
**Dr. Jiao Shun Fa**

*Translated by:*

**Dr. Tsoi Nam Chan**

## Introduction

Dr. Jiao Shun Fa was born on December 25, 1938 in High Canal Village, Jishan County, West Commune in Shanxi province, China. He currently serves as professor and chief physician where he is a member of the China Association of Acupuncture and Moxibustion and Chairman of the Acupuncture and Moxibustion Society in Shanxi province.



In 1970 Jiao Shun Fa invented "head acupuncture," a medical protocol that has been used successfully over the past several decades to treat a variety of brain disorders. In 1976 he developed a new treatment for cerebral vascular disease using carotid artery medicinal drips. Over the years Dr. Jiao has promoted this method and its application throughout

China. In 1986 he received a first prize National Award for his work in the field and for significant achievements in the development of Chinese medicine.

Dr. Jiao has worked tirelessly for more than 40 years developing clinical acupuncture treatments and conducting extensive medical research in the field of Chinese medicine. His medical writings include *Head Acupuncture*, *Jiao Shun Fa Head Acupuncture*, *Carotid Drip Liquid in the Treatment of Cerebrovascular Disease*, *Seeking the Truth of Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, *Soul of Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, *Acupuncture and Moxibustion Theory and Clinical Practice*, *Treating Diseases with Acupuncture* and more than ten other texts published in China and abroad. His new version of the classic Chinese medical text, the *Ling Shu*, is his latest and in many ways most important contribution to the literature of contemporary Chinese medicine.

## **Preface**

Acupuncture treatment is an ancient healing science that was developed by scholars millenia ago in ancient China. As early as 2,500 B.C. its fundamental method of treating disease by inserting needles into key energy points throughout the body was explained in the first chapter of the famous *Ling Shu - Nine Needles and Twelve Yuan-Source Points*. This groundbreaking book has remained a classic of Chinese medicine since the time it was written.

Yet, due to misunderstandings of its sophisticated and complex content over the centuries, a substantial part of the *Ling Shu's* essential teachings has been lost or misinterpreted. This loss, in turn, has had a profoundly negative impact on the transmission of accurate acupuncture knowledge, even up to the modern era.

The time has come, therefore, for a new interpretation of this ancient text – an interpretation that revises the many errors and misinterpretations that have plagued this great work over the centuries, and that better captures its original meaning and intent.

The present book, it is hoped, will provide this needed corrective, amending errors that have crept into the text, clarifying important medical issues, and protecting its luminous medical insights for the use of future generations to come.

Jiao Shun-Fa  
February 24, 2008

## Foreword

Though I have read *Nine Needles and Twelve Source Points* for more than 40 years, each time I delve into its profound writings I experience yet another new inspiration. One needs not only a calm mind and clear thoughts to read this text but also a capacity for bold decision making and a courageous initiative. Yet even now after all these years I make no claim to understanding this ancient text fully or to having plumbed its depths. At best I have formed a group of personal opinions about its teachings and have gained insights simply by being in daily contact with its wisdom. There is a saying in Chinese that speaks of "throwing bricks to attract jade." In other words, sometimes even an incomplete and imperfect attempt serves to help and motivate others. That is my intention with this present translation.

Jiao Shun-Fa  
October 30, 2007

One needs not only a calm and clear mind to read *Nine Needles and Twelve Source Points* but also boldness in decision making and courage to take initiative.

Jiao Shun-Fa  
February 27, 2007

*Ling Shu Chapter 1- Nine Needles and Twelve Source Points* sums up in depth research, core experiences and theoretical achievements of Chinese medical specialists in the treatment of disease with acupuncture over thousands of years. It advocates and promotes the treatment of disease by needling the *Jingmai*, and should be considered an advanced medical science for its rational theories, excellent methods, and unique therapeutic effects.

Jiao Shun-Fa  
March 18, 2007

# Chapter One

## Original Text - Summary of Notes

### Section 1 - Summary of the Original Text

1 - Original Text: The Yellow Emperor said to *Qi Bo*: "I treat my people as if they were my own children. I feed them and collect land taxes from them. I have pity on their inability to take care of their own health and on their vulnerability to diseases. I want to protect them from being treated by (harsh) drugs or stone implements that may cause side effects and pain. To accomplish this feat I prefer to use fine needles that can be inserted into the skin. These needles activate the *Jingmai* (acupuncture meridians), regulate and nourish the *Qi* (life force) and blood, manage the currents and counter currents (of energy), and assemble the entering/exiting convergent points. This system of fine needle acupuncture can certainly be passed down to future generations and last forever. Still, it must adhere to a set of clear rules. It must be easy to use, difficult to forget, and become a classical doctrine. We must, therefore, summarize its teachings into chapters, clarify what is extrinsic in it and what is intrinsic, and define both an end and a beginning. In short, in order to make everything appear organized we must create a book titled "Acupuncture doctrine." I would like to hear your opinion on this matter.

Summary of Notes: The Yellow Emperor explained to *Qi Bo* that people cannot afford the taxes they must pay due to illness. He wants to protect them from drug or stone implement treatment, and encourages the use of fine needles that pierce the *Jingmais* (that is, pierce the somatic nerves), thus regulating *Qi* and curing disease. [Please refer to Note 1 and 2 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2]

This method of treatment can definitely be transmitted to future generations, but legislation (organization) is necessary. You should, therefore, write a book termed "Acupuncture Doctrine." Divide this book into the following chapters: diagnosis of major illness, *Jingmai* – the distribution of nerves in the viscera and body surface, acupuncture methods, and principles of point selection. Write all this information down in true, simple language that makes the book easy to use and difficult to forget. This information will then be passed down from generation to generation, lasting for numberless years without cease. I would like to hear your views on this subject.

“JINGMAI”  
Calligraphy by Dr. Jiao

2 - Original Text: A poor doctor knows only the physical location of an acupoint, while a superior doctor seeks the spirit (*Shen*) (inside the point). This spirit is wonderful; it is like a distinguished guest in the door.

Summary of Notes: An inferior doctor's only concern is which physical location on the body to perform acupuncture. A superior doctor knows how, when and where to needle the *Shen* point. *Shen* is very wonderful, like a distinguished guest in the door. *Shen* is described here. Refer specifically to the *Jingmai* within the acupoint - the body somatic nerves. Please refer to Note 3 in Chapter I, Section 1.2.

*T.N. Chan Interpretation: It could be that the needle is connected to the divine matrix.*

3 - Original Text: "A poor doctor only knows how to look for the physical joints (*Guan*) while the superior doctor knows how to find *Ji* – gate mechanism in the point. The movement of *Ji* never exceeds its space. When we observe it from the outside *Ji* activity appears tranquil in the space it occupies. It appears to have only a slight movement. Its coming cannot be met and its going cannot be followed or grasped. Those who understand the gate mechanism are able to pierce the points precisely without missing a hair's breadth. Those who do not understand gate mechanism will miss the timing of *Qi*. Piercing points in a random way is useless. Knowing where *Qi* is coming from and where it is going and timing of *Qi* to get the best result is important. This phenomenon is really wondrous. The poor doctor remains in the dark (about it), while the superior doctor knows all these (important facts).

Summary of Notes: Poor doctors only know how to perform acupuncture on the physical location of the points, while superior doctors know how to needle the gate, *Ji*. The *Ji* is located in the point itself, and its *Ji* activity at this point never exceeds its space. Through anatomical and physiological studies, they have found in the point of *Ji* that the surface appears outwardly tranquil with only slight pulsation. But in reality information is being rapidly conveyed (in and out) of the *Ji*. Most doctors may not experience this fact through commonly used methods. By understanding the vital timing of the *Ji* - gate mechanism it will be easy to pierce the target (reach the heart of the point). Not knowing the vital timing of the *Ji* mechanism is the same as locking the trigger (of a gun). Shooting will not be precise, and such random piercing is not going to hit the target. Poor doctors are in the dark about these principles, while superior doctors possess unique skills and can induce this wondrous phenomenon. Please refer to Note 4 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

4 - Original Text: The term "going" means "counter flow." The term "coming" means to "follow." By knowing "counter flow" and "follow" a doctor can perform acupuncture without asking (needless questions). *Qi* activity is not made deficient by withdrawing the needle with the tip going against the pathway of the *Jingmai*, and is not in excess by following the flow of the *Jingmai* with the needles. Counter flow and follow: if you understand this theory you definitely have mastered the great art of needling technique.

Summary of Notes: When applying acupuncture, the direction of needling that diminishes the "arrival of *Qi*" is described as "the direction of counter flow," while the direction that

triggers the "arrival of *Qi*" is called "flow." By knowing the meaning of flow and counter flow you can insert the needle (without fear). Withdrawing the needle, the "arrival of *Qi*" will then be reduced; thrusting it during the "arrival of *Qi*" enhances it. Follow your instinct to regulate the intensity of *Qi* by moving the needle backwards and forward. This is the most important technique in clinical acupuncture.

5 - Original Text: Deficiency by filling, excess by draining, chronic stagnation by eliminating, and over abundance of evil *Qi* by withdrawing.

Summary of Notes: For "deficiency by filling," one needs to needle the points repeatedly to promote *Qi* activity until signs of activity are obvious. This method is called "excess." Needling should stop when the *Jingmai* is activated. For "excess by draining" one should withdraw the needle a bit to relax the intensity of *Qi* activity. For "chronic stagnation by eliminating" the doctor must withdraw the needle slightly when it meets resistance and cannot be fully inserted, then change its direction. "Over abundance of evil *Qi* by withdrawing" refers to the process of pulling back the needle when there is obvious pain in order to stop unpleasant sensations. Please refer to Note 5 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

6 - Original Text: *The Great Essentials* says: "Slow, then rapid is excess. Rapid, then excess is deficiency. Speaking of excess and deficiency, sometimes it is there, sometimes it is not. As for examining before and after, sometimes it is there, sometimes it is not. Speaking of the feeling of empty and full, sometimes we gain it and sometimes we lose it."

Summary of Notes: This is an old text from ancient times. "Slow then rapid is excess" means that when the tip of the acupuncture needle reaches the correct depth of the *Jingmai* then push it in slowly. If *Qi* appears immediately, the needle tip is considered to be at the solids level. This "solidness" demonstrates that contact has been made with the *Jingmai* or somatic nerves. "Rapid then slow is empty" means that despite the fact that the piercing speed is fast and hard the *Qi* does not arrive. This means that the needle is still in the state of "emptiness" (that is, it has not yet pierced *Jingmai*), a condition that is referred to as "empty." Sometimes it is there, sometimes it is not." This phrase means that when needling *Jingmai* the solidness and emptiness that we talked about is sometimes there, while at other times it cannot be felt. When observing and comparing the situation before and after the arrival of *Qi*, sometimes there is sensation and sometimes there is no sensation. In reference to excess and deficiency, sometimes it is there, sometimes it is not there. That is to say, with emptiness and solidness, sometimes there is sensation and sometimes there is no sensation. Please refer to Note 6 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

7 - Original Text: Needling precisely has to do with being quick and being slow.

Summary of Notes: Experienced doctors are able to contact the *Jingmai* (somatic nerves) and trigger the arrival of *Qi* very quickly. It is more difficult for poor doctors to pierce and hit the *Jingmai* in this way. The difference between the two is whether or not they can quickly trigger the arrival of *Qi*.

8 - Original Text: To drain is called *Ying*. The meaning of *Ying* is to hold it inside, release and expel the Evil *Qi*, discharge *Yang*, and then remove the needle. Evil *Qi* can be drained in this way. To tonify is to follow. The sensation of following is as if to forget, to stimulate and press like a mosquito or gadfly bite, to detain and return, then to withdraw like an arrow leaving the bowstring. Command the left to follow the right; this will cause the *Qi* to stop.

Summary of Notes: Dispersion is called *Ying*. This means that to disperse you must have *Ying* energy present. The meaning of *Ying* is to push the needle into the acupoint and then insert it forward. When the sign of *Qi* arrival suddenly appears the patient often cannot stand the pain. At this point you pull the needle backwards and the *Qi* arrival sensation will diminish or disappear.

To tonify is to follow. This means that to tonify one must push the needle into the acupoint. This specific technique calls for needling the acupoint, and piercing close to the *Jingmai* (somatic nerves) or when the tip of the needle is getting close to its surface. When the *Qi* has arrived, however, (the situation) is still not ideal and there is still need to tonify, push the needle slowly inward. Be cautious here, stopping as soon as it is obvious that the *Qi* is reached. If the needle is pushed too quickly or forcefully, or if the direction is changed, the arrival of *Qi* may disappear entirely.

9 - Original Text: As for the way to hold a needle, holding it tight is precious. Therefore, hold the needle straight and pierce perpendicularly. Do not needle to the left or right. Observe attentively. Watch the patient (carefully) while you work.

Summary of Notes: Hold the needle tightly and insert it perpendicularly. Observe closely. The arrival of *Qi Ji* proves that the needle has reached the *Jingmai* (the somatic nerve). At this point stop needling immediately.

10 - Original Text: Piercing and *Qi* has not arrived. Don't ask how many times; pierce and *Qi* arrives, then remove the needle and no more piercing.

Summary of Notes: When using fine needles to pierce *Jingmai*, if there is no sign of *Qi Ji* appearing do not worry about how many times you pierce. Simply continue piercing until *Qi Ji* arrives, then remove the needle and stop. Please refer to Note 7 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

11 - Original Text: The essence of needling is that once *Qi* arrives a (healing) effect is generated. This effect appears quickly, as when the wind blows away the clouds, suddenly causing the sky to become clear and blue. This process describes the complete *Tao* of needling.

Summary of Notes: During acupuncture, as soon as *Qi* becomes active the therapeutic effect is obtained. This effect comes quickly, as when the wind suddenly blows away the dark clouds. Please refer to Note 8 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

12 - Original Text: The Yellow Emperor said, "I would like to know about the origins of the five *Zang* and six *Fu* organs." *Qi Bo* replied, "Five *Zang*, Five *Shu*, five times five is 25 *Shu*. Six *Fu* and six *Shu*, six times six is 36 *Shu*. Twelve *Jingmai* and 15 *Luo Mai* constitute the 27 *Qi* pathways on which the *Qi* travels up and down. Where *Qi* comes out it is called *Jing* (the well) point, where it trickles it is called *Ying* (the spring) point, when it is poured it is called *Shu* (the stream) point. Where it runs it is called *Jing* (the river) point, and when it gathers it is called *He* (the lake) point. The 27 *Qi* pathways all depend on these five *Shu* points. Crossings of *Jie*, 365 junctions. For those who know the essence, one sentence is enough; those who do not know talk pointlessly and endlessly. The so-called *Jie* are places where *Shen Qi* travels in and out; they are not skin, muscles, tendons and bones.

Summary of Notes: The Yellow Emperor said he wished to know the origins of the five *Zang* and six *Fu* organs. *Qi Bo* said that the five *Zang* organs each have five *Shu* points. There is a total of 25 *Shu* points. Six *Zang* organs each have six *Shu* points making a total of 36 *Shu* points. There are 12 *Jingmai*, and 15 *Luo Mai*. The *Jing Qi* all have to go through the five *Shu* points.

In conclusion, he said "Crossings of *Jie*, 365 hui" means that the 365 points throughout the body are formed by junctions of *Jingmai* that cross each other many times. This knowledge is the result of scientific research done long ago. But (through the years) there have been different interpretations of this principle and experts have not been able to agree. So people say that "for those who know the essence, one sentence is enough; those who do not know talk pointlessly and endlessly." In modern times, the superior doctor summarizes the meaning of *Jie* in one statement, proclaiming that "*Jie* are junctions of the anterolateral and posterolateral spinal tracts and neurofilaments that cross multiple times. These junctions freely transmit (motor and sensory) information, and they are neither skin, muscles, tendons nor bones." Please refer to Note 9 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

13 - Original Text: Observe the eyes; one can know (much from) their dilation and recovery.

Summary of Notes: By examining the size of the pupils, their shape, and their sensitivity to light one can judge the condition of the patient. Please refer to Note 10 in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.

14 - Original Text: Whenever one starts to practice acupuncture, one must check the patient's pulse, examine the condition of the patient's *Qi*, and then begin treatment.

Summary of Notes: Whenever doctors start to do acupuncture they must check the pulse to gauge the condition of the patient and confirm whether or not acupuncture is a suitable healing method for this particular disease.

15 - Original Text: The five *Zang* and six *Fu* organs have 12 *Yuan*-source points. The 12 *Yuan*-source points originate from the four "*Guan*" (elbow and knee joints). The four "*Guan*" are used to treat diseases in the five *Zang* organs. When there is disease in the five *Zang* organs the 12 *Yuan*-source points should be chosen for treatment. The 12 *Yuan*-source points are the keys for

the five *Zang* organs; (they help them) receive the *Qi* and the “tastes” (essence) of the 365 *Jie* (points). When there is illness in one of the five *Zang* organs there will be reactions appearing in the 12 *Yuan* (source) points. The 12 source points have their outlet points (for these reactions) respectively. Knowing their source clearly and seeing their reactions, the doctor can identify disease in the five *Zang* organs. For the lung, the *Yuan*-source point is originated from LU 9 (*tài yuān*). For the heart, the *Yuan* point is from PC 7 (*dà lín*). That of liver is at LV 3 (*tài chōng*). That of spleen is at SP 3 (*tài bái*). That of kidney is at KI 3 (*tài xī*). That of *Gao* is at RN 15 (*jiū wěi*), and that of the *Huang* is at RN 6 (*qì hǎi*). All of these *twelve* source points (are used to) treat the diseases of the five *Zang* and the six *Fu* organs of the body.