

laws of nature. We can also be sure that, at the time God first created different forms of life, the natural laws were the same-- if for no other reason, because the first chapters of Genesis describe the animal and plant life as being similar to what we know today. If the natural laws had been different, the animal bodies would have had to be different. For example, if the rate of diffusion of oxygen through the film of water in the air sacs of the lungs had been appreciably different from what it is now, the lungs (and consequently the rib cage) of air-breathing mammals and birds would have had to be radically different in size. This would then, in turn, call for a much larger or smaller heart and circulatory system, as the case might be. Furthermore, the differing diffusion rate and the differing circulatory system would greatly alter the size and efficiency of the muscles, and even of the bones of the animal.

The other kind of teaching in the Bible which assures us that nature is dependable and knowable consists of the numerous places where specific statements are made concerning nature. When Christ was here on earth he made statements that showed his confidence in the reliability of nature. In Luke 6:43-44 we find him saying, "There is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush." Thus Jesus recognized that thorn trees and briar bushes are governed by natural laws of heredity, and that these laws are dependable. Somewhat later, when talking to the multitudes, He said, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say 'A shower is coming', and so it turns out. And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day', and it turns out that way. You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?" (Luke 12:54-56) In this quotation, Jesus is of course not saying that the people could always predict the weather accurately, but He is certainly recognizing the definite fact that rain comes from clouds and that it is warmer toward the equator than toward the north pole.

From these and other similar statements in both the Old and New Testaments we must conclude that natural laws are stable, because God established them that way. Also, scientific research has unveiled many natural laws which are now known to be definitely true, and need not be doubted. We referred above to the law of the use of oxygen by animals for obtaining energy from food. This has been observed to be true so many times that we have no trouble recognizing its validity. There are a large number of other natural laws of which we are just as certain. William Harvey spent 20 years experimenting with animals and examining human beings to determine the relation of blood flow to the heart. In 1628 he published his momentous results, informing the world that the blood is pumped out of the heart through arteries and returns to the heart through veins, to be pumped out again. This was a great discovery, and is a firmly established fact which is redemonstrated dozens of times each day as heart surgeries are performed. Thus science has discovered this