CREATION FOR KIDS

No. 28

By Jasmine Ireland

ALL OUR PEOPLE

HAVE YOU ever tried doubling numbers? Get out your calculator and press 1 x 2 = , then press x 2 again. Now do the same again. Each time, you double the number that was on the screen. Your number pattern should go 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024, 2048, 4096, 8192, … 524288, … 33554432, ……. The number soon becomes so big it can't fit onto your calculator screen!

Doubling numbers is not just a calculator activity. Our *population* (the number of people) on our planet grows in much the same way. At this moment in our history, our population grows by an extra 1.7% each year—this is called a *growth rate*. That means that each year, for every thousand people that live on Earth, an extra 17 people are added. That doesn't sound like much, but there are over six billion (6,000,000,000) people living on Earth today. So there are over 100 million people being added every year!

Six billion certainly sounds like a lot. But a small country the size of England could fit every person in, and everyone would have about 20 square metres of their own space (about the size of a large bedroom)!

Perhaps you have heard that humans have been around for millions of years? If humans were around for a million years and the population grew by 1.7% each year, how many people would there be? Our calculations tell us that there would be a huge number—about 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 (one followed by 43 zeroes) on Earth today. But wait! Earlier we said there are only six billion people on Earth today! Six billion, which has nine zeroes, is tiny compared to a number with 43 zeros (for short, we can write this as 10^{43})! So where are all the people?

The missing number of people is not the only problem if we believe humans have lived on Earth for a million years. Evolutionists say that during a time they call the 'Stone Age', there were between one million and 10 million people. Now that should mean that there are a lot of bodies buried in the ground! With so many buried bodies, we should have found many more than we have today. If we believe that these bodies would have disintegrated by now, then we should at least be finding the artefacts (man-made objects) that were buried with them. Not only are we not finding many bones, but we are not finding the number of artefacts that would have been buried with so many dead bodies!

If we follow the timescale and events of the Bible, we learn that early in our history God sent a worldwide Flood that killed the wicked people on Earth. There were only eight survivors of this event: Noah and his wife, Japheth and his wife, Shem and his wife, and Ham and his wife—that makes eight in total. The population of the earth started again with them!

Noah and his wife were the *first generation* after the Flood. Their sons (Japheth, Shem and Ham) and their wives are the *second generation*. Their children are the *third generation* (Japheth had seven sons, Shem had five and Ham had four, and we don't know how many daughters each had!), and so on. With every new generation, the number of people increased. The number got larger when their children had children, and larger still when those children had children! As we saw when we doubled numbers on the calculator, growing numbers makes large numbers **very** quickly.

Calculating the numbers of people on Earth now by growing numbers from Noah's family is a bit tricky for these pages. But if the current growth rate in number of people (1.7% per year) stretched back to Noah's time, we would now have over sixty thousand billion billion billion (6 with 31 zeroes after it). We cannot imagine that many people; it's a gigantic number! We need less than a third of the current growth rate to get all the people we have. This allows for wars, diseases and famines that might have slowed down population growth in the past. Thinking about population growth supports what the Bible tells us about our new beginning with Noah's family.

The Bible is more than the story of Jesus; it is also the story of our history before Jesus' birth, from the very first day of creation (and Jesus is the Creator—John 1:1–3).

The Bible tells us that God judged the whole Earth with a flood about 4,500 years ago, killing every person except Noah and his family. Every one of the six billion people alive today is descended from this family!