

Deflect, bend, swerve

(34)

Herschel's care was the hall mark of a great observer; he was not prepared to jump to any conclusions. Also, to be fair, the discovery of a new planet was the last thought in

anybody's mind. But further observations by other astronomers besides Herschel revealed two curious facts. For a comet, it showed a remarkably sharp disc; furthermore it was moving so slowly that it was thought to be a great distance from the sun, and comets are only normally visible in the immediate vicinity of the sun. As its orbit came to be worked out the truth dawned that it was a new planet for beyond Saturn's realm, and that the 'reviewer of the heavens' had stumbled across on an unprecedented prize. Herschel wanted to call it georgium sidus in honour of his royal patron king George III of Great Britain. The planet was later for a time called Herschel in honour of its discoverer. The name Uranus, which was first proposed by the German astronomer Johan Elert Bode, was in use by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1977, while recoding the occultation of a star behind the planet, the American astronomer James Elliot discovered the presence of five rings encircling the equator of Uranus. Four more rings were discovered in January 1986 during the exploratory flight of voyager 2. In addition to its rings, Uranus has 15 satellites (moons), the last ten were discovered by voyager 2 on the same flight; all revolve about its equator and move with the planet in an east-west direction. The two largest moons, Titania and Oberon, were discovered by Herschel in 1787. The next two Umbriel and Ariel were found in 1851 by the British astronomer William Lassell. Miranda, thought before 1986 to be the innermost moon, was discovered in 1948 by the American astronomer Gerard Peter Kuiper.

Q1) What are georgium sidus and Herschel according to the passage?

Georgium sidus and Herschel were the suggested name of newly discovered planet, Uranus. Herschel was the discoverer of that planet. However, he wanted to call that planet as georgium sidus in the honour of Great Britain's King George III.

Q2) Within which period and which moon was believed to be the moon closest to the surface of Uranus?

From 1948 until 1986, the moon Miranda was believed to be the moon closest to the surface of Uranus.

3) In 1977, what the American astronomer James Elliot was doing when he discovered the presence of five rings of Uranus!

James Elliot was recording the occultation of a star behind the planet.

4) Describe the main idea of the passage.

In this scientific discovery based passage, the author is informing about discovery of Uranus. He is talking about Uranus's rings, moons and idea of its name.

5) Give the appropriate title to the passage?

Scientific discovery of Uranus.