

# There is no joy without discovery

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The sun is 1,200,000 times the size of our earth, and 92,960,000 miles distant from it. Despite this enormous distance, light and heat from the sun reach us in considerable quantity. By cosmic standards, the sun is a relatively small star; it only appears large to us because of its proximity. Most stars are both larger and more radiant than the sun. Vast globes of heat and light, they are scattered in huge quantities throughout the universe. They have been shining for billions upon billions of years, but their reserves of thermal energy show no signs of being exhausted.

How do stars produce such vast quantities of energy? The astrophysicist Hans Bethe spent years exploring this question. Finally, he discovered that the secret lies in the carbon cycle. The day that Hans Bethe made his great scientific discovery was one of great joy for him. His research in this field won him the Nobel Prize for physics in 1967.

Hans Bethe's discovery only answered a minutely partial side of the real question; it did not reach the true crux of the matter. His discovery of the carbon cycle leaves another greater question unanswered: how does this carbon cycle come to operate in stars? A true believer discovers the answer to this question in the form of God, the Maker and Sustainer of the universe. It is He who has invested the stars with this magic property.

How ironical it is that a small discovery should make a scientist lose himself in a spontaneous outburst of feeling, while the far greater discovery that a believer makes — that of God — should create in him no such feeling. Those who really believe in God feel the joy of their discovery. So uncontrollable is their joy that they cannot help expressing it to others. If there are no traces of the joy of discovery, then the discovery itself has yet to be made.