

Surah 18. Al-Kahf

Asad: SAY: "If all the sea were ink for my Sustainer's words, the sea would indeed be exhausted ere my Sustainer's words are exhausted! And [thus it would be] if we were to add to it sea upon sea." ¹⁰⁵

Malik: O Muhammad tell them: "If the ocean were ink with which to write the words of my Rabb, the ocean would surely be consumed before the words of my Rabb are finished, even if We brought similar quantity of ink to replenish it.

Pickthall: Say: Though the sea became ink for the Words of my Lord, verily the sea would be used up before the Words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like thereof to help.

Yusuf Ali: Say: "If the ocean were ink (wherewith to write out) the words of my Lord sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Lord even if we added another ocean like it for its aid." ²⁴⁵³

Transliteration: Qul law kaṇa albaḥru midadan likalimaṭi rabbee lanafida albaḥru qabla an tanfada kalimatu rabbee walaw jina bimithlihi madadan

Khatab:

Say, ?O Prophet,? "If the ocean were ink for ?writing? the Words of my Lord, it would certainly run out before the Words of my Lord were finished, even if We refilled it with its equal."

Author Comments

105 - Lit., "if We were to produce the like of it [i.e., of the sea] in addition". It is to be noted that, as pointed out by Zamakhshari, the term al-bahr ("the sea") is used here in a generic sense, comprising all the seas that exist: hence, the expression "the like of it" has been rendered by me as "sea upon sea". (See also [31:27](#)).

2453 - The Words and Signs and Mercies of Allah are in all Creation, and can never be fully set out in human language, however extended our means may be imagined to be.

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