Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them. Ezra 5:1, 2.

In rebuilding the house of the Lord, Zerubbabel had been encompassed with manifold difficulties. In former years, adversaries had “weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,” “and made them to cease by force and power” (Ezra 4:4, 23). But the Lord interposed in behalf of the faithful builders, and now He speaks through His prophet, Zechariah, to Zerubbabel, saying, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it” (Zechariah 4:6, 7).

Throughout the history of God’s people, great mountains of difficulty, apparently insurmountable, have loomed up before those who were advancing in the opening providences of God. Such obstacles to progress are permitted by the Lord as a test of faith. When [we are] hedged about on every side, this is the time above all others to trust in God and in the power of His Holy Spirit. We are not to walk in our own strength, but in the strength of the Lord God of Israel. It is folly to trust in man or to make flesh our arm. We must trust in Jehovah; for in Him is everlasting strength. The One who, in response to words and deeds of faith, made the way plain before His servant Zerubbabel, is able to clear away every obstacle devised by Satan to hinder the progress of His cause. Through the exercise of persevering faith, every mountain of difficulty may be removed.

Sometimes God trains His workers by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulty. He seeks to inspire them with a determination to make every apparent failure prove a success.—The Review and Herald, January 16, 1908.

This devotional is taken from Ye Shall Receive Power by Ellen G. White.