

Cinco de Mayo

Cinco de Mayo (fifth of May in Spanish) commemorates the Mexican army's defeat of French forces on this day in 1862. The French army, one of the most highly regarded fighting forces in the world, expected to conquer Mexico City with little resistance.

Under the command of Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza, however, the greatly outnumbered Mexican army confronted the French troops at the city of Puebla. The French withdrew after two hours of fierce fighting. The victory of the smaller Mexican force against a larger French force was a boost to morale for the Mexicans.

Gen. Zaragoza died months after the victory due to illness. A year after the battle, a larger French force defeated the Mexican army at the Second Battle of Puebla, and Mexico City soon fell to the invaders.

In the United States, Cinco de Mayo has taken on a significance beyond that in Mexico. More popularly acknowledged in the United States than in Mexico, the date has become associated with a tribute to Mexican-American culture. These celebrations began in California, where they have been observed annually since 1863.



In Mexico, the commemoration of the battle continues to be mostly ceremonial, such as through military parades or battle reenactments. The city of Puebla marks the event with an arts festival, a focus on local cuisine and reenactments of the battle.

In the Bible, when Judah was under attack, King Hezekiah reminded the people that the Assyrian army was made up of mere men, while the Israelites had a “power far greater” on their side (2 Chronicles 32:7-8).

Sometimes, we may feel as if we are outnumbered by a powerful army – when our troubles seem greater than our resources or when we’re surrounded by people hostile to God and His followers.

In those times, we need to remember that the Holy Spirit who indwells us is far greater than any force trying to conquer us.

Be renewed in that assurance today. You are a child of the King, and He loves you supremely.

He may have a great army, but they are merely men. We have the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles for us! (2 Chronicles 32:8 NLT).

– Beecher Hunter