

Virtual Tour 3d

(Click and Drag mouse to move inside)

Tophet was a place of cult under the open skies, used from around 770 to 50 B.C. by the Phoenicians and then by the Carthaginians as a cemetery and crematorium for infants. The word tophet comes from the Aramaic "tapà" which means "place of arson". What's more it is a word that can be found in some phrases of the Old Testament where it indicates a place near Jerusalem in the Ennom valley or Gehenna. When archeologists discovered these places they gave them the conventional name "Tophet". It is not known if these places had a particular name and if this name was Tophet.

An old theory that withstood until a few decades ago describes the sanctuary as a sacrificial area where the firstborn male child of aristocratic families was sacrificed to the supreme divinities of the Phoenician- Punic pantheon during times of war, famine, poverty, drought and epidemics in order to obtain graces. After being sacrificed, the bodies were cremated and their remains were conserved in the urns that you can see in front of you.