

Culture

The Jewish space lasers are real — well, kind of

The Iron Beam is a laser-powered defense Israel has been developing for years

By [Mira Fox](#) March 2, 2026



Iranian missiles and Israeli interceptive missiles over Beirut, Lebanon. The laser, had it been used, would have been invisible. Courtesy of Getty Images

Everyone made fun of Marjorie Taylor Greene when she said that Rothschild-funded space lasers had caused forest fires.

But, as it turns out, the space lasers are real. Well, sort of. They aren't starting forest fires or causing major weather events, as Greene claimed in her post. Israel does, however, have a laser that shoots in the general direction of space. But that's enough for some conspiracy theorists to feel vindicated.

"No longer a 'Conspiracy Theory.' Israel just used a Directed Energy Weapon (DEWs)," reads one viral tweet about the lasers. "During Biden's term the media worked relentlessly to Fact Check these weapons as conspiracy theories."

Indeed, as Israel and Iran exchanged missiles over the weekend, videos circulated online purporting to show Israel shooting down missiles using a laser. In the videos, missiles

launched by Hezbollah from southern Lebanon, near the border with Israel, appear to flame out moments after taking off. (Israel has yet to officially confirm that the rockets were shot down by lasers, and the videos aren't definitive; the missiles could have been defective and burned out on launch.)

But it is true that Israel has been working on defensive lasers for years. In 2022, then-Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said, "We have successfully completed a series of tests on our new 'Iron Beam' laser air defense system. This may sound like science fiction, but it's real." The laser system was [reportedly](#) delivered and deployed across Israel in December.

"It has nothing to do with the 'Jewish space laser' conspiracy theory," said Mike Rothschild, a researcher on extremism (no relation) and author of [Jewish Space Lasers: The Rothschilds and 200 Years of Conspiracy Theories](#). "Conspiracy theorists often take real or in-development technology and twist it around for their own purposes."

The laser works by shooting a grouping of small beams toward the projectile it is attempting to destroy, explains [a report](#) on the system's development in *National Defense Magazine*. When one hits its target, the beams concentrate on the target until it is incinerated.

The lasers are less effective than the existing Iron Dome system, which works by intercepting missiles with other missiles and exploding them before they hit the ground. The laser can only reach missiles within about a 10 kilometer range, and, like any beam of light, can be blocked by terrain or atmospheric conditions like haze or clouds. On the other hand, the lasers are cheap to use, since they don't require a ballistic missile for each engagement, and, for the same reason, they cause less collateral damage from falling debris.

The existence of the laser and its first — or first public — deployment has plenty of people joking about Jewish space lasers being real, and apologizing to Greene, though the Iron Beam has little to do with Greene's allegations of a laser used to start targeted forest fires for government profit.

Conspiracy theorists may be crowing about the supposedly huge secret they've uncovered. But the laser isn't secret at all. The Iron Beam is a well-funded and well-publicized project that has been in development for years, funded by both the U.S. and Israel. The first model was [unveiled](#) in 2014 at the Singapore Air Show. Smaller versions have been used to shoot down drones at close range for the past several years.

The aura of secrecy is key to the world of conspiracy theories. If antisemites can frame anything done by Jews or Israel as an underground, hidden project, it gains an undertone of corruption and danger.

The Iron Beam, however, has [its own Wikipedia page](#). It features 40 sources — which means there are at least 40 other articles, going back over a decade, about the laser defense device. If you think that's a secret, you're just not paying attention.

Mira Fox is a reporter at the *Forward*. Get in touch at fox@forward.com or on Twitter [@miraefox](#).