**Lesson for Older Students Concerning the Midrashim about Nimrod, Terah and Abram**

**Purpose**:

To help students become aware of how threatening the Jewish idea of one God was to Nimrod and still is to dictators today. It is assumed that the students know some of the Midrashim about Nimrod. Question them. Ask them to tell the story. Re-read them once. There are texts to read from in the Curriculum Box.

**Procedures**:

1. Show the students one newspaper article that discusses the President of the United States and some law that he is trying to pass. Help them get a sense of the power and the limits of power of a president.

a) What does the Constitution say about his power?

b) What is the role of Congress?

c) What happens to a president who abuses power? (example of Nixon)

d) List on the blackboard those things that limit our president's power.

2. Discuss the power of Nimrod and other Kings in the ancient world.

a) Did they have Constitutions or a Congress?

b) What limited their power?

c) How powerful did they appear to be to their subjects?

3. Today we have dictators. Where are the dictators in the world today? What are the powers of the dictator of Libya as opposed to the powers of our president? Have the class list the ways the power of a dictator are like the power of Nimrod. The Midrash says Nimrod wanted to be a god so people would worship him. Why would he want to do that? What do dictators fear most (losing power)?

It meant that Nimrod was not god. People didn't have to bow down to him. There was a G-d more powerful than he. That is why he didn't want the idea to spread. People can be stopped. Ideas cannot be stopped. Judaism is an idea, a belief that cannot be stopped.

Ask the following questions:

a) Brainstorm some ideas that dictators have tried to destroy (list them on the board).

1) Democracy

2) Religion

b) The idea of one G-d being the father of one people is the origin of democracy. Help students understand that importance to us as Americans and Jews in the next lesson.