As you read all the way through Matthew 2:1-23…

1. How would you describe the difference between Herod's response and the wise men's (magi's) response to the news of the arrival of Jesus, King of the Jews?
2. Do you think that Herod believed the birth of the Messiah to be a real event? How does that help our understanding of the times during which Jesus was born?
3. Read carefully through the passage looking for attitudes, actions and intentions of Herod…
    a. Look in 2:3…what was Herod's initial response?
    b. To whom and to what does Herod look for answers concerning the birth of the Messiah?
    c. Why do you think Herod asked to see the wise men (magi) in secret?
    d. What pretense did Herod give to the wise men (magi) for wanting to know the whereabouts of the Messiah?
4. How does Herod's overall response in chapter 2 demonstrate the worthiness of Jesus?
5. How did God redirect the wise men (magi)?
6. How many times did God use angels/dreams to direct people in Chapter 2?
    a. Why do you think these dreams/angels were necessary?
    b. In each of the dreams, what was the purpose of the revelation?
7. What might be driving Herod's rage in v.16?
    a. How far was Herod willing to go to eliminate the threat to his throne and personal autonomy?
    b. Why do you think it was so easy for Herod to resort to murder of children?
    c. Ultimately, what might Herod's goal have been?
8. In comparing Herod's response to that of the wise men (magi), what might we learn about our how different people respond to Jesus? (Think of the comparisons of worship and murder, fulfillment and threat, hope and peril, longings denied and longings fulfilled.)
9. How does John 3:19-21 fit into this story?