

Messiah for the Magi

Unlike Luke, Matthew does not tell us about the shepherds coming to visit Jesus in the stable. His focus is immediately on foreigners—Gentiles, non-Jews—coming from the east to worship Jesus.

So Matthew portrays Jesus at the beginning and ending of his Gospel as a universal Messiah for all the nations, not just for Jews.

Here the first worshipers are court magicians, or astrologers, or wise men not from Israel but from the east—perhaps from Babylon. They were Gentiles. Unclean, according to the Old Testament ceremonial laws.

And at the end of Matthew, the last words of Jesus are, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18–19).

This not only opened the door for us Gentiles to rejoice in the Messiah; it added proof that he was the Messiah because one of the repeated prophecies was that the nations and kings would, in fact, come to him as the ruler of the world. For example, Isaiah 60:3:

Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.

So Matthew adds proof to the messiahship of Jesus *and* shows that he is Messiah—a king, and promise fulfiller—for all the nations, not just Israel.