Not an Irish Joke

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Not an Irish joke, but Irishmen form the thick end of the wedge of Y chromosome gene distribution in European and Middle Eastern men reported *Nature* Vol. 404, p351, 23/ Mar/2000. The study involved the gene group haplogroup 1, carried on the Y chromosome and therefore transmitted only from father to son. Only 1.8% of Turkish men had the genes but the frequency gradually increases as you go west through Europe until the West coast of Ireland shows 98.3% of native born men with ethic Irish surnames (also transmitted from father to son) had haplogroup 1 genes. Those who did the study believe the distribution of haplogroup 1 is best explained by "migration of Neolithic farmers from the near-east" who settled Ireland approximately 4,200 years ago.

Editorial Comment: Migration of farmers from the Middle East across Europe about 4,200 years ago certainly fits Biblical history, which records God judged mankind at the Tower of Babel (approximately 4,500 years ago), to force people to separate and spread over the world. Europe was therefore populated by people who moved from Mesopotamia through Turkey, across Europe and eventually to Ireland. The traditional "Irish legend" is that Ireland was first inhabited by Noah's granddaughter which would mean 'secular' geneticists have the 4,200 year time span about right. (Ref. Ireland, Genes, Babel)