
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- First of all, I would like to thank the Lord for giving me the ability to complete this task.
- I would like to thank my family for the support they gave me throughout this research.
- I thank Marlise for her support and patience throughout my studies.
- To the guys in the lab for their support and valuable discussions regarding this most interesting field.
- I would like to thank Hugo van Zyl for the BeamPROP simulations.
- Finally I thank my supervisor, Professor P.L. Swart for his support and guidance throughout this work.

Did blind chance know that there was light and what was its refraction, and fit the eyes of all creatures after the most curious manner to make use of it? These and other suchlike considerations, always have, and always will prevail with mankind, to believe that there is a Being who made all things, who has all things in his power, and who is therefore to be feared.

Isaac Newton