In this lecture, Prof. Zvi Zohar, a leading expert in Sephardic culture and rabbinic jurisprudence, will discuss the views of three important Sephardic rabbis of the twentieth century on the moral commitments of Jews towards all humans, and on the obligation of a Jewish State to accord equal rights to its all citizens. The presentation will be based upon reading key texts authored by Rabbi Khalfon Moshe HaCohen (1874-1949), Rabbi Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uzziel (1880-1953), and Rabbi Hayyim David HaLevi (1924-1998).

Zvi Zohar is Chauncey Stillman Professor of Sephardic Law and Ethics at Bar Ilan University. He teaches in the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Jewish Studies, and from 2001 to 2011 he headed Bar Ilan University’s Rappaport Center for Assimilation Research and the Strengthening of Jewish Vitality. Zohar is a Senior Research Fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute of Advanced Judaic Studies in Jerusalem, where he heads the Alan A. and Loraine Fischer Family Center for Contemporary Halakha. He was also a founding faculty member of Paideia – The European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden.