UttamKshama is the first Dharma out of the ten Dharmas of Jains. Ordinarly it means not to cause misery to any living being or not to get angry on any unpleasant and unwanted happening. Forbearance (Kshama) is the inherent virtue of soul. When the soul degrades from its real attributes to ill nature, such a soul is called attached (raagi) or full of malice - ill-will (dwaish) etc., because soul is simple and forgiving by nature. Rightly has it been said: ‘To err is human; to forgive divine’.

Anger makes a man blind and maddens him, for ‘when eyes are blood shot, vision is limited’. Overpowered by anger, a man may commit anything right or wrong, and fails to make distinction between proper and improper, truth or untruth, and good or bad. In short, the Jain Acharyas have proclaimed anger as leading to degradation.

Discarding anger and getting stable in one’s real nature, is Kshama, Kshama is soul’s inherent wealth. Being endowed with this real wealth, this living being (jeeva) is called forbearing in disposition.

A wealthy person named Daya Chand used to live in Ujjain City. He was forbearing, benevolent and a very light hearted man. His wife was named Akshama, but she was Akshama by name only. There was not even a bit of forbearance (Kshama) in her heart. In truth, she was a highly callous and ill-tempered lady. Right from dawn to dusk it was her inevitable routine to quarrel with every member of her family. She used to speak ill of her parent-in- laws in presence of her husband Daya Chand, and would say, “I will not live with your mother as she abuses and insults me.” Addressing her the learned and well bread Daya Chand said, “My parents are your parents as well; serving them is your uppermost duty. The anger of elderly persons subsides on remaining humble. All become subordinate to a humble person. Everyone can be overpowered through forbearance (Kshama) and politeness. Therefore, be forgiving and justify your name Akshama.”

On hearing these words of advice from her husband, the fire of anger of Akshama got all the more inflamed. She started hurling filthy abuses on her husband too. But the forgiving Seth did not utter a single word. At mid-day when Seth Daya Chand came home for meals, his wife started murmuring in anger. Daya Chand took meals calmly and then set out for his shop. As soon as he came down from his house and began to walk on the road, the wife Sethani threw garbage over him from above. Going upstairs, the Seth said to his wife with usual smile, “Oh, dear! Daily you simply thundered but today you have rained as well.” Seeing the calm and quiet nature of her husband, her anger vanished and lying down at his feet she apologized for her fault. This example shows that an angry person can be made calm, polite and full of reverence only by the weapon of forgiveness (Kshama). Therefore, one is duty bound, to try to befriend an angry man or an enemy with love rather than being angry on him.